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Piscataquis Project: Sporting Camps in the Piscataquis River Watershed, Section B, Katahdin Iron Works Area

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Piscataquis Project

Sporting Camps in the Piscataquis River Watershed

Section B

North from Brownville to Prairie, the Ebeemee Ponds, and KIW

South from KIW on the tote road to Big Houston Pond and the bowl in the shadow of the Barren-Chairback mountain range

North from KIW on the Chamberlain Lake Tote Road to B-Pond, the headwaters of the East Branch of the Pleasant River, and the West Branch ponds

March 2017

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<https://sites.google.com/a/maine.edu/mountain-explorations/home>

Preface - Sporting Camps in the Piscataquis watershed

I started this research and writing project when I retired in 2010. My interest was in reading the history of Maine's wilderness through which Maine's Appalachian Trail passes between Monson and the West Branch of the Penobscot River. In sum, I found little written history about logging or trapping or sporting camps, the three major reasons why people were in this wilderness. Consequently, I began to look for what I could piece together.

After a year of work, I realized that the southern 50 miles of this wilderness was the Piscataquis River watershed and the northern 50 miles was the West Branch of the Penobscot River watershed. Then I turned my focus to the northern 50 miles and wrote articles on the West Branch watershed for *Appalachia* magazine and another appeared on the Fogler Library Maine Digital Commons Maine History site.

In 2014, I began to spend more time with the Piscataquis watershed. Life in the watershed revolved around hunters, trappers, wilderness farmers, loggers, tote roads, railroads, and sporting camps. The sporting camps, the primary focus of this text, began to slowly develop in the late 1870s and reached their heydays before the 1930s. This paper traces the development of these first sporting camps to the present day or until they no longer existed. It also includes those who had a private dwelling built before about 1930. The key focal points are the people, their transportation, their operation, their location, the evolution of their camp, and the nature of camp life.

The Piscataquis watershed is divided into four sections. The preface of each section is the same with the exception of the last paragraph where I name and thank those who have contributed to the section.

This history of sporting camps and early private camps in the Piscataquis watershed is a compilation of previously uncollected disjointed bites of information that are organized according to the first access routes and beginning with the earliest places to stay.

I gathered information from ten major printed sources and through conversations with people. Town histories and local historical societies provide information about the development of a community. The Bangor and Aroostook Railroad yearly publications from 1895 to 1952, titled *In the Maine Woods* after 1899, provide many sporting camp and proprietor names. The Maine Register, 1874 -, is another source for sporting camp and proprietor names. *The Maine Sportsman* (1894-1908) and *Forest and Stream* (1873-1930) provide information about specific sporting camps. Through newspaper search

engines that include 19th Century Newspapers and NewspaperArchives more information is available from papers like the *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*.

I attempted to locate information about every name that appears in the text. If a name appears with no other personal information, then I was unable to discover such. Information about the people comes from three primary sources, Ancestry.com, collections of family papers held by Fogler Library at University of Maine, and personal interviews. The Piscataquis and Penobscot county registries of deeds, the Maine Bureau of Public Lands lease office, and Maine's Unorganized Territories Tax Office helped track ownership in some cases.

The notes in all sections enable the reader to know, at a minimum, the general source of information and, in some cases, specifics. For example, where I provided information about a town, I listed the documents used in one note.

The maps are primarily for orientation. In that context, not everything in the text appears on a map. In terms of sporting camps, what does appear is the name of the first known owner.

I want to recognize and extend a most appreciative thank you to the following individuals who provided information for Section B. Your contributions certainly made the text much richer: Bruce Allgrove, Ray Bickmore, Desiree Butterfield (University of Maine Fogler Library), Oscar Cronk, Al Cowperthwaite (North Maine Woods Association), Jim Dow, David Edson (James W. Sewall Company), Matthew Ewing, Genie Gannett, Florence Grosvenor, Ester and James Hardwick, Chuck and Rosemary James, John Leathers (retired State of Maine Game warden), Bill Macomber, Marcia McKeague (Acadian Timber – Katahdin Forest Management), Jean Megquier, James Murray (James W. Sewall Company), Richard Neal, Tom Nelson (Prentiss and Carlisle Company), Sarah Otley (University of Maine Library), Sherrie Patterson, Candy Russell (Moosehead Historical Society), Eric Stirling, and R. Michael White. Thank you for your support and generosity.

Thank you for your interest in this history. I would appreciate any thoughts you wish to share.

Bill Geller

Farmington, Maine

Sporting Camps in the Piscataquis River Watershed

Content of the sections

Section A: north from Bangor to Milo and Brownville to the eastern portion of the watershed, Schoodic, Upper Ebeemee, Seboeis, Cedar, and Endless lakes

Section B: north from Bangor to Brownville and Prairie, the Ebeemee ponds, and Katahdin Iron Works (KIW); South from KIW to Big Houston Pond and the bowl in the shadow of the Barren-Chairback mountain range; North from KIW to B-Pond, the headwaters of the East Branch of the Pleasant River, and West Branch Ponds, headwaters for the West Branch of the Pleasant River

Section C: north from Bangor to Katahdin Iron Works and west along the West Branch of the Pleasant River on the Pleasant Valley Tote Road to sporting camps on the river, the east end of Long Pond, Little Lyford Ponds, and Big Lyford Pond

Section D: from Bangor to Greenville via access points to Sebec Lake, Lake Onawa, Long Pond Stream and Long Pond, West Shirley Bog and Indian Pond, and the Wilson ponds

Reader's Note:

Each of the A-D sections has three subsections. The first subsection is the same for each of the A-D sections; it is an introduction to the whole of the watershed. The second subsection traces the development of the route from Bangor to the community that served as the departure point for sports traveling to a particular geographic area in the Piscataquis watershed. The third section has the history of the sporting and private camps on the waters accessed from the departure point. Any town name not followed by the name of a state is in Maine.

Section B
Piscataquis River Watershed:
Access to the central portion of the watershed
via the Chamberlain Lake and Big Houston tote roads

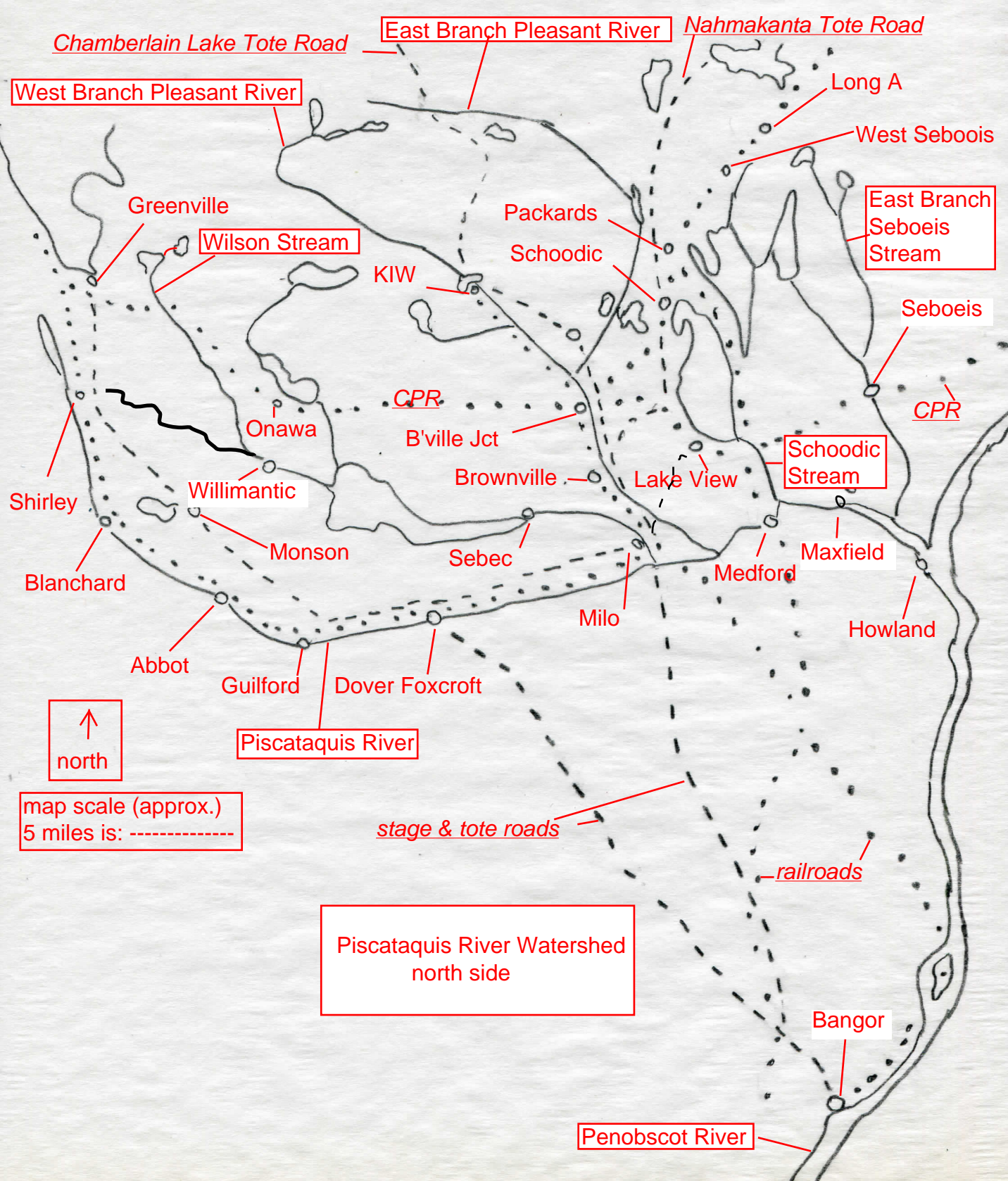
An Introduction:

General Access to and Development on the Piscataquis River and its Tributaries

The Native Americans traveled up the Penobscot River, north into the Maine wilderness, from their community not far above the ocean's tidal effects.¹ They paddled past their villages at Olamon and Passadumkeag. At Piscataquis village², they either continued north or turned west into the mouth of the Piscataquis River and carried around the waterfall. Those on this westerly route traveled the waterway to the mouth of a substantial stream flowing from the north. Their travel on this stream brought them to a lengthy east-west running lake, Sebec (large body of water), which they paddled through to its northwest cove with a short stream to another lake, Obernecksombeek (Onawa), at the foot of the mountains. From here, they portaged along a stream that cut through the mountains to another long narrow lake and then did a series of portages and small pond

¹ Bangor is the current name of this community.

² Howland is the current name of this community.



crossings to reach Sebem³ and Kineo their source of flint. For centuries, the Native Americans used this route and their encampments dotted the waterway.

Colonial trappers and hunters also used the waterways as their roads. Settlers, who came to farm in the growing seasons and log in the winter, followed in 1800 and by 1824 had formed new communities at just about every waterfall, their source of power to mill lumber, grind grain, and, later, weave wool and cotton.⁴ Those who owned the land along these waterways, where towns formed, were willing to sell and have the area develop. However, landowners away from the river did not sell land; they held it for logging and their initial source of loggers were those who moved into the settlements.

In 1802 and 1803 a number of settlements began to spring up on the Piscataquis River.⁵ Medford was 12 miles from the Penobscot River and Dover and Foxcroft⁶ were 30 miles west of Medford. Three years later and eight miles above Foxcroft, farmers started Guilford and, 5 more miles upriver, Abbot. By 1824, families reached the headwaters of the Piscataquis River near Shirley, and Little Wilson Stream at Shirley Corner, and Big Wilson Stream east of Greenville. Shirley developed as it did around the foot of the East

³ Moosehead Lake

⁴ All town names appearing in the text are Maine towns unless otherwise noted.

⁵ The early dates cited for settlements indicate when the first settlers began clearing land.

⁶ Foxcroft was on the north side of the river and Dover was on the south side. They merged in 1922 to become Dover-Foxcroft.

Bog, because the landowner's strategy was to settle the east side of the township and leave the west side for logging.⁷

Development on the tributaries flowing into the north side of the river also commenced in 1802-1803. Settlers left the Piscataquis River on the Sebec River to establish Milo at the two-mile mark, half way between Medford and Foxcroft, and Sebec at the mouth of Sebec Lake, another six miles up river. On the west end of Sebec Lake at the mouth of Big Wilson Stream, other families settled Willimantic by 1830.⁸ In 1806, more settlers passed north through Milo to form Brownville five miles to the north at the first

⁷ The following books provide the history of these communities.

Bennett, Wayne and others. *A Centeseptuquinary History of Abbot, Maine 1827-2002*. Greenville, ME: Moosehead Communications.

Loring, Amasa. *History of Piscataquis County Maine from Its Earliest Settlement to 1880*. Portland, ME: Hoyt, Fogg & Donham, 1880.

Phillips, Allen H. *Shirley – The People and Their Town*, 2009.

Stevens, Louis E. *Dover-Foxcroft: A History*. Somersworth, NH: New Hampshire Printers, 1995.

True, Emma J. Editor, *History of Greenville 1836–1936*. Augusta, ME: Augusta Press, 1936.

White, Charlotte et al. *Guilford Maine Sesquicentennial*. 1966.

⁸ Blanchard, Dorothy A. *Old Sebec Lake*. Dover, NH: Arcadia Publications, 1997.

Conservation Commission. *Willimantic, Past & Present*. 1976.

Milo Historical Society. *Milo, Brownville and Lake View*. Portsmouth, ME: Arcadia Publishing, 2009.

Sawtell, William R. *The Bowerbank Story*, c.2000.

Wright, Shirley Nason. *History of Sebec Maine 1812-1987*. Presque Isle: ME: Print Works, 1987.

falls on the Pleasant River. Eight years later farmers came from Sebec and Brownville to settle around Silver Lake at the foot of the White Cap and Barren-Chairback mountain ranges on the West branch of the Pleasant River. By 1840, folks referred to the community as Katahdin Iron Works (KIW).⁹ In 1816, a farmer went north of Abbot through the woods and settled at the east end of Lake Hebron, Monson. Settlers continued northeast from Monson in 1824 to the fertile interval of Long Pond Stream at the head of Lake Onawa, but a village never developed here.¹⁰

While settlers originally navigated a waterway, roads quickly connected them. The land route was necessary, as the waterways did not always have sufficient water for consistent transportation, particularly in the late summer and fall. In 1824, the first stage line went from Bangor directly to Milo, where it split with one fork leading north to Brownville and the other fork following the north side of the Piscataquis River to Foxcroft

⁹ Gerrish, Judson, and Henry Gerrish. *Brownville Centennial Book*. Dover-Foxcroft, ME: F.D. Barrows, 1924.

Sawtell, William R. *K.I. III*. Bangor, ME: Furbush-Roberts Printing, 1988.

Sawtell, William R. *Katahdin Iron Works and Gulf Hags: Before and Beyond*. Milo, ME: Milo Printing Company, nd.

Sawtell, William R. *Katahdin Iron Works Revisited*. Self published, 1983.

¹⁰ Anderson, Ken. Profiles in Rural Maine: Onawa, Maine. allmainematters.com

Bennett, Marilyn Temple and Kermit Colson Bennett. *Vaughn's Elliot[t]sville*. Wiscasset, ME: The Copy Shop, 2010.

History of Monson Maine 1822-1972.

Sawtell, William R. *Onawa Revisited*. Milo, ME: The Paper Pusher, 1989.

and two years later reaching Greenville.¹¹ By 1833, a tote road and stage line went directly from Bangor to Foxcroft and on to Greenville, saving loggers costly miles and time. At the same time, loggers extended the other fork, which lead to Milo and then Brownville, to points farther north with access to the east side of the Piscataquis watershed and the West Branch of the Penobscot watershed. For the next 50 plus years, the tote roads to Greenville and Brownville north were the two main arteries loggers used to supply their operations. The number of men on anyone night involved with toting supplies could range from 10 to 40 men at one of their stops. In general, logging operations to the north grew year by year and as a result so did the commercial operations along these two major arteries.

Each of the towns on the river became a center of commerce. The community's farming families grew the food staples needed by the loggers and their oxen, and later horses (post-1890). In the winter, their men folk turned to logging, trapping and hunting. Each community had at least one enterprising farm family that opened an early hotel that served loggers and teamsters headed to the logging camps, housed those cutting nearby and cared for river drivers in the spring.¹² As saw and grain mills developed, some families built boarding houses for the growing work force and, as these workers began to build their own homes and travelers on the stage line increased, the boarding houses gradually morphed into hotels that still served boarders.

¹¹ For the first few years the Greenville settlement was on a flat area about half way between the foot of Moosehead Lake and the Wilson ponds.

¹² Information identifying hotels comes from the town histories and *The Maine Register*.

By the late 1860s, the level of commerce, as it pertained to farm and wood products, and travelers, was sufficient enough to bring the railroad north from Bangor to the Milo area near the confluence of the valleys of the Piscataquis and Pleasant rivers. Here the rails swung west along the north side of the Piscataquis River. In 1869, Milo became the supply hub for loggers using the major tote roads north. That same year the supply hub for points west shifted to Foxcroft, the end of the rail line for the next two years.¹³ Guilford served as the hub until 1874, when the rails ended at Abbot, where southbound trails picked up a new commodity, slate, from the Monson mines (c.1870). Two years later, the line reached Blanchard and then Greenville in 1884.

Back in Milo and at about the time the rails reached Greenville, crews laid another set of tracks from the rail line's turn to the west below Milo village through Brownville and up the West Branch of the Pleasant River valley to KIW (1882); the junction became known as Milo Junction (or Derby). Influencing this financial commitment was the activity of the iron works and tourist traffic to KIW's popular Silver Lake Hotel. This moved the logger's supply hub for the tote road that went north to the West Branch of the Penobscot River to Brownville and for the southern portion of the tote road to Chamberlain Lake to KIW; the northern portion's hub was now Greenville.

Between 1870 and 1883, the addition of these rail lines, which provided a more comfortable and attractive means of travel, began to lure north more adventuresome sports

¹³ Much of the railroad information in this document is from: Angier, Jerry and Cleaves, Herb. *Bangor & Aroostook: The Maine Railroad*. Littleton, MA: Flying Yankee Enterprises, 1986.

interested in hunting and fishing. Enterprising writers and map makers recognized an opportunity and the first Maine tourist guidebooks and maps for this area, published between 1875 and 1893 by John Way, Charles Alden John Farrar, and Lucius Lee Hubbard, described canoeing routes into the Maine wilderness with the key rendezvous point being Greenville. They promoted the wilderness hotels at Moosehead Lake and the hotel at Silver Lake, and described those areas' attractions. As tourist guides, they offered no information about the territory east of KIW and Brownville, because the area had no communities and no Native American canoe route, and consequently no current canoe route, crossed the area in moving east to west or north to south.¹⁴

The residents who lived in the communities on these two rail lines in the 1880's also noted the increased sport activity and quickly took advantage of it. They made their hotels more attractive. Enterprising farmers and woodsmen began advertising their guiding services and took a sport or two at a time to one of their trapper's camps, a tiny four wall shelter that provided some protection from the weather. Their scattered trapper's camps were usually on the shore of some body of water that they had to themselves. The

¹⁴ Farrar, Captain Charles A. J. *Farrar's Guide to Moosehead Lake and North Maine Wilderness*. Boston: Lee & Shepard, 1890.

Hubbard, Lucius L. *Hubbard's Guide to Moosehead Lake and Northern Maine*. Cambridge, MA: Author, 1889 and 1893.

Way, John M. Jr. *A Guide to Moosehead Lake Region and Northern Maine*. Boston: John M. Way Jr., 1874.

Cook, David S. *Above the Gravel Bar: The Indian Canoe Routes of Maine*, 2nd edition. Milo, ME: Milo Printing, 1985.

landowners had no objection to these men fishing, hunting, picking spruce gum, trapping, and cutting a few trees for their tiny cabins. Most of these men also logged or surveyed or cruised timber and the landowners knew they would take care of the land from which they derived their livelihood.

By the mid-1890s, the sporting camp business began to blossom and the number of sporting camps grew rapidly. Enterprising trappers and guides gave up their small trapper's cabins and built more comfortable structures. Other guides and loggers seeing the influx built new sporting camps, some large enough to sleep 12 or more people and others put up a small cluster of sleeping cabins with a common kitchen and dining center.¹⁵ They started small and grew over time. With this change, landowners began issuing commercial leases in the 1890s to guides for a few dollars a year.¹⁶ One major reason for landowners providing leases scattered about their lands was for fire protection; no loggers were in these woods during the summer and early fall at the height of fire season. Terms for some leases specifically included a condition that the holder would report intruders and rogue camps, and watch for fires and help put them out, and not build outdoor fires. After about 1910, when loggers began stringing miles of phone lines to connect their camps, they consciously included the sporting camps.

¹⁵ A reading of all the issues of *The Maine Sportsman* and *In the Maine Woods* leads to this conclusion.

¹⁶ Copies of camp leases are found in lumbermen's family papers of which a large number are available at University of Maine Fogler Library.

Contributing to a final growth spurt was the 1893 opening of another rail line from Brownville north to Aroostook County.¹⁷ From the initial opening, the freight line provided passenger service to the eastern portion of the Piscataquis watershed, Schoodic and Seboeis lakes and Norcross at the foot of the Lower Chain Lakes (Elbow, North Twin, Pemadumcook and Ambejejus lakes). Also at this time, the B&A began to play a major role in attracting people to the Maine woods. In 1894, they hosted a Maine booth at the first annual New York City Sportsman Show. They also participated yearly in a similar show in Boston. For these shows, they hired popular Maine guides and proprietors of many of the developing sporting camps. The display often included a full log cabin along with pictures and taxidermy work that include large fish and animals.

In addition to the sportsman shows, the B&A advertised, distributed small promotional brochures, and printed a yearly booklet of up to 200 or more pages promoting the north Maine woods as accessible from its rail lines. The first year of publication was 1895 and, starting in 1900, its yearly title was *In the Maine Woods*.¹⁸ Another popular publication devoted to Maine hunting, fishing and sporting camps and printed between 1893 and 1908 was Maine publisher Herbert W. Rowe's *The Maine Sportsman*,¹⁹ a

¹⁷ The rail line that began inching north from Bangor and following settlers along the Piscataquis River was the Bangor and Piscataquis Railroad, and the line from Brownville to Katahdin Iron Works (KIW) was the Bangor and Katahdin Iron Works Railroad. These two lines merged in 1891 to form the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad's Piscataquis Division, in this text the B&A.

¹⁸ By using the resources of The Maine State Library and Internet Archives one can find a nearly complete set. The New York Public Library has the first issue in 1895.

¹⁹ A combination of the resources at Bangor Public Library and the Maine State Library provides a nearly complete set.

monthly magazine. Its seemingly endless stream of pictures of long strings of big fish and game suggested everyone was successful.

Writers like Captain Charles Alden John Farrar, who spent summers in Rangeley, and Holman Day, a Mainer, wrote numerous articles and popular books pertaining to adventures in the Maine woods. Day, who began writing about the Maine woods in the mid-1890s and through the first two decades of the 20th century, was a prolific writer.²⁰ Some of his novels used the men and women he met on his excursions in the Maine woods and some of them lived near his camp on Long Pond on the west side of Chairback Mountain. Cornelia Thursa (Fly Rod) Crosby of Phillips, Maine's first registered guide and another well-known spokesperson for Maine's wilderness, was a prolific writer for the numerous sportsman type magazines at the turn of the century. She was often the organizer of the Maine booth at the yearly Boston and New York sportsman shows.

Most sporting camps did little, if any advertising. However, what they did do through their guides and cooks was provide every sport an exceptionally rewarding experience that caused them and their families to return year after year and encouraged their friends to join the fun in Maine. As a collective, the guides knew what they did could draw more people to an area or cause them to seek another, so they made sure people had a good time and were successful in fishing or hunting or seeing the sights. The cooks, often the wives of the owners, prepared amazing meals. The daily breakfast was the equivalent

²⁰ Two books Day wrote at Long Pond are: *Squire Phin*, New York: A.S. Barnes, 1905; and *King Spruce*, New York: A.L. Burt, 1908.

of the modern day Sunday brunch and the daily lunch and supper were each like Sunday diner.

In terms of the interests of sports,²¹ Greenville, Monson, Foxcroft, Milo, Brownville, and KIW developed into the main rendezvous communities on the west, south and east sides of the Piscataquis watershed. These towns provided access to the Piscataquis watershed wilderness that has always been the domain of trappers, loggers, and sports. Each of these communities was on one of the loggers' major tote roads from Bangor and served as a hub for other winter logging tote roads that reached into the wilderness and that guides and their sports used.

Access from Greenville into the Piscataquis watershed did not develop until c.1890 and it was not until c.1917 that sports began to use it. The logger's tote roads did not at first enter the headwaters of the easterly flowing Piscataquis River tributaries of Big and Little Wilson streams and the East and West Branches of the Pleasant River. The loggers cutting in the Greenville area prior to 1900 were working for the mills in the Kennebec River system, which flows west and south.

Monson was the rendezvous point for sports traveling 12 miles to Long Pond Stream in Bodfish intervale, where they had access to Long Pond, the west side of the Barren-Chairback mountain range, and Lake Onawa from 1873 to the present day. The stream flowed south from Long Pond, and carved easterly through the southern slopes of the Barren-Chairback mountain range, passed through the intervale and emptied into Lake

²¹ Sport is a term that refers to a person who hires a guide for a wilderness experience.

Onawa. The tote road from the intervale to Long Pond was not always passable, even with a horse and cart. A short side road from the Bodfish intervale farms led to a landing near the upper end of Lake Onawa. Loggers drove Lake Onawa's rugged outlet stream, Ship Pond Stream, to Sebec Lake, but a route never developed from Sebec Lake up along the stream to Lake Onawa.

At Dover and Foxcroft, tourists and sports departed the stage from Bangor and went a short three miles by foot or carriage to Blethen's Landing, later renamed Greeley's Landing, at about the middle of Sebec Lake. Bateau and canoes called at the landing for those going west on the lake to Willimantic and east to Bowerbank and Sebec. By 1861, the lake had a steamboat capable of handling 300 people. Its proximity to Bangor made the lake a popular summer destination for tourists.

From Milo some sports continued west along the Piscataquis River, others turned north to Prairie and then northwest to KIW. Beginning in 1883 some took the tote road to the foot of Schoodic Lake and continued on to a sporting camp on the lake or those on Seboeis and Endless lakes.

At Brownville, the route north split and the left fork, the Chamberlain Lake Tote Road, continued north to Prairie and the Ebeemee lakes where it shifted westerly to reach Silver Lake. The right fork, the Nahmakanta Tote Road, went northeast over Searles Hill, then made an arc to the north, crossed near the foot of Norton Pond (also known as Peter's Pond) well above the Schoodic Lake shore, and went straight north across the high land to the northwest corner of Schoodic Lake where it continued on to pass on the east side of

Upper Ebeemee Lake and ended 10 miles further north at South Twin Lake's southwest corner. Trappers, hunters, guides and sports headed to the east most portion of the Piscataquis River watershed, Schoodic, Seboeis, Endless, and Cedar lakes' area, used the road to reach a major side road from the Norton Pond area to Schoodic Lake.²²

The community that developed at Silver Lake became known as Katahdin Iron Works (KIW) in the 1840s and was both an early destination and rendezvous location for loggers cutting on both the east and west sides of the Barren-Chairback and White Cap mountain ranges. KIW's Silver Lake Hotel served tourists from c.1870 to 1913 when it burned; its best years were in the 1880s. While its popularity waned in the 1890s, an increasing number of sports came through the community on their way to a sporting camp. Those headed to a sporting camp in the Big Houston Pond watershed, the east side of the Barren-Chairback mountain range, took the tote road from KIW south to Big Houston Pond. Others bound for a sporting camp on the west side of the mountain range took the Pleasant Valley Tote Road from the head of Silver Lake and continued along the West Branch of the Pleasant River, through Gulf Hagas that split the mountain range. Another group took the tote road north from KIW through Big White Brook valley to the sporting camps at B-Pond, Yoke Pond and those in the headwaters of the East and West Branches of the Pleasant River.

²² Hubbard, Lucius L. Map of Moosehead Lake and Northern Maine, 1879, 1883, 1891, 1894. Piscataquis County Maine Map. Houlton & Dover, ME: George Colby, 1882.

Walling, H. F. Map of Piscataquis County, Maine. New York: Lee & Marsh, 1858.

Walling, H.F. Map of the State of Maine. Portland, ME: J. Chace Jr., 1862.

In 1894, the railroad was the only reasonable and comfortable way to get within perhaps 20 miles of some of these developing sporting camps. The final leg was by horse and wagon or canoe or foot or any combination thereof. Logging roads were exceedingly rough except for winter, when snow filled in around the stumps and rocks, so many preferred walking. By the early 1890s, the tote road north from Brownville became so rough that what used to take a day for a horse with a cart full of sportsman type dunnage to reach South Twin Lake now took two. The condition of a side road was a function of where loggers were going to cut or had recently cut. Since loggers abandoned the roads after they cut, access to some sporting camps changed based on an available road. Most proprietors spent considerable time keeping roads open. For many proprietors ownership necessitated having a horse.

The mix of people who visited the sporting camps changed over time. Up through the 1890s sports were generally men and Mainers, many from the towns on the Piscataquis and Penobscot rivers, and particularly the Bangor area.²³ As conditions at the sporting camps quickly improved, men from all over New England, New York City and northern New Jersey and Philadelphia started arriving. Beginning about 1900, the B&A publications began to advertise for women and by 1910 wives and children were also

²³ This conclusion is based on reading sporting camp guest books.

Big Houston Camps guest register 1896-1939. University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections

Long Pond Camps / Dean Register 1895-1919. University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections

Onawa House Guest books 1897-1904. University of Maine Fogler Library, Special Collections

coming for summer stays of a month or more. They came year after year and in some cases, like at Yoke Pond Camps, the proprietor let them leave trunks of material for their visit the following year. Some prevailed upon a proprietor to build them their own camp on the proprietor's lease and a few built a camp for their personal use on leased land.

By the mid-1920s, the often-used sections of the loggers and stage roads had been improved and more people were buying cars.²⁴ For example sports could now drive from Foxcroft to Greeley Landing on Sebec Lake or from Monson to Bodfish intervale at the head of Lake Onawa. Ridership on the trains began to decline and service to KIW stopped in 1922. Sports continued to come, but they still had to rely on the camp proprietor to get them the last miles to the sporting camp.

The number of sports and families at the sporting camps began to decline in the 1920s. Many of the camps had remained rustic; for the most part business was not sufficient enough to generate the revenue at most sporting camps to make the needed upgrades or in some cases even basic upkeep. The food was excellent and plenty of it, but it was plain with little variety and some sporting camps struggled kept pace with people's broadening tastes. The developing popularity of the car opened up other travel opportunities for families and led to declining numbers of train passengers. Consequently, connections on the lines to the north-country were no longer as frequent or convenient. The depression resulted in fewer sports coming north. During the early 1940s, some

²⁴ A general description of Maine's road development appears in: *A History of Maine Roads 1600-1970* by State Highway Commission, Maine Department of Transportation. The document is online: digitalmaine.com/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1006&context=mdot_docs

sporting camps closed or scaled back as a result of the war. By 2010 the number of sporting camps in the Piscataquis River Watershed that opened before c.1930 had dwindled to three, and only one of these is still family owned.

Being a sporting camp proprietor was a way to sustain a cherished life style and share it with others. The early farmers and loggers who initiated this business did so in order to keep their property or lease and sustain their families. These men and their families cobbled together a living in these woods by farming, foraging, logging, picking spruce gum, guiding sports, guiding for other sporting camps, trapping, hunting for the city markets when it was legal, building and caring for telephone lines, surveying, cruising timber, scaling timber, building private camps for others, and acting as winter caretakers. Many early proprietors turned their sporting camp over to family or sold to a loyal long time guide or a friend in their community, often with the right to live out their years at the camp. Ownership of the sporting camps continued to be predominantly local Mainers through the 1940s, but then began to drift away from such owners as costs started to rise, exceeded their means and sales began to involve bank loans. Those private individuals who run the last remaining commercial sporting camps continue to have that passion for the life at a camp and have preserved a Maine tradition.

From Bangor to Milo, Brownville, and Brownville Junction

Milo area

How many sports may have come north from Bangor through Milo between the 1820s and 1860s via the tote and stage roads is unknown, as is where they may have been

headed other than perhaps to a town west along the Piscataquis River or northwest to the Chamberlain Lake area on the Chamberlain Lake Tote Road or north to Schoodic Lake and the Lower West Branch of the Penobscot River on the Nahmakanta Tote Road.

By the 1870s, tourists and sports were passing through Milo on their way to one of the earliest wilderness tourist hotels, the Silver Lake Hotel in Katahdin Iron Works (KIW). Their mode of transportation changed to a train in 1869, when the railroad tracks from Bangor reached the Milo area. These travelers probably spent the night at J.E. Gould's hotel, Gould's Hotel, that opened in the 1860s and remained the only hotel in town until 1913. By the 1890s, Milo guides, like C.S. Harris, W. L. Hobbs, Charles Randall, D. Harris, Will Crosier, Owen Chase, Frank Tibbetts and A.D. Bumpo, who at a minimum worked the watersheds of the East and West Branches of the Pleasant River, and Schoodic, Seboeis, Cedar and Endless lakes, often met their sports at either the hotel or the station.²⁵

The first road from Milo to the southwest corner of Schoodic Lake opened in 1883 and it became a well-traveled link. Six years later Merrick Thread Company, in anticipation of the east-west running Canadian Pacific Railroad (CPR) opening in 1889, built a large spool mill at the end of the road on the lake shore, where the tracks would soon be. The community of Lake View quickly developed and the road became the link between the two communities.²⁶

²⁵ Guide lists appeared regularly in the Bangor and Aroostook publication *In the Maine Woods* and in the magazine *The Maine Sportsman*.

²⁶ Sawtell, William R. *Schoodic Lake Revisited*. Greenville, ME: Moosehead Communications, 2008.

Another important transportation change for Milo in 1883 was the extension of rail service to KIW via Brownville. The area around the Milo station became known as Milo Junction or Derby, and it was eventually a major rail hub and repair center. By 1906, demand apparently exceeded what Gould's hotel had to offer and the Stewart House opened at Milo Junction with E.S. Daggett as proprietor. Four years later in Milo, Walter E. Dillon opened the Dillon House and in 1918 the American Thread Company, which Merrick Thread Company joined, built the Atco Inn that served their company needs, housed permanent residents and catered to transients.²⁷ When KIW rail service ceased in 1922, the Dillon Inn (Dillon House), the Stewart House, and the Atco Inn, now the only three area hotels, provided the overnight stay for sports traveling to and from KIW.²⁸

Sawtell, William R. *Lake View Revisited: A Centennial Book*. Milo, ME: Milo Printing Company, 1991.

Sawtell, William R. *A History of Lake View Maine*. Milo, ME: Milo Printing Company, 1985.

²⁷ Walter Dillon joined his other two brothers, John E. and Herbert T., as a business proprietor in the Brownville and Milo area. Beginning about 1900, he worked for his older sister Nellie and her husband as a hotel cook in the Greenville area. His other sister Mary lived in Greenville where her husband was a merchant. Two other brothers Fredriese and James worked for the railroad in Brownville. They had all been born and raised on a farm in Quebec.

²⁸ Walter Dillon and his wife Laura managed the Dillon House through at least 1940; he died in 1954 and the house closed about 1977. Gould changed his hotel's name to the Oriental House, sold in 1887 to W.E. Weymouth who ran the establishment for four years until A.F. Spearing purchased it and renamed it Milo House in 1902. A succession of owners kept it open through 1917. ATCo sold in 1931 to O.E. Hamlin who sold to Stanley in 1934. Walter T. Day renamed it Milo Inn in 1935 and ran it until 1942 when O.E. Blackden took over for a time. By 1952, James A. Pickard was operating the hotel. The hotel closed by 1961. The Stewart House had two other owners before F.E. Gould bought it in 1913, sold by 1917 to R.M. Colbath, who changed the name to the Piscataquis Hotel and sold in 1924 to O.P. Hackett, who operated the establishment until c.1940.

Brownville and Brownville Junction areas

Five miles north of Milo on the stage road was Brownville, located on the Pleasant River below the confluence of its east and west branches. The village must have provided some form of accommodation, as it was at the junction of the Chamberlain Tote Road (c.1832) and the Nahmakanta Tote Road (c.1832). Furthermore, it was the staging area for loggers who were already cutting up on the East Branch of the Pleasant River by 1825. In the mid-1870s, sports and other guests came to Brownville to meet their guides and start out on the Chamberlain Lake Tote Road, their route to the Silver Lake Hotel at KIW. Once the railroad reached KIW in 1883 more sporting camps began to open to the west and their sports joined the stream of travelers. The earliest known hotel, and still the only one in 1905, was the Brownville House that Nathaniel C. Herrick, a highly successful farmer, opened before 1872 and his family continued to run until 1923. Herrick advertised to fishermen and provided transportation to many nearby fishing spots, something the Milo hotels apparently did not do.²⁹

Up until 1894, traffic on the Nahmakanta Tote Road was primarily related to logging, but guides with folks on canoeing trips going to and coming from the north were users. Enterprising teamsters hauled canoes and dunnage in both directions on the road to either Upper Jo-Mary Lake, which they reached via a side road, or South Twin Lake. The

²⁹ Twenty-one years later, Nathaniel died and his son Carol E. Herrick took over and renamed the hotel, Herrick House, which he ran until 1905, when the name changed to Hotel Herrick. He sold in 1923 to Francis L. Fogarty who may have only run it for a year before it closed. Mrs. Peter Holt either reopened it in 1935 or built or used another structure and operated through 1939.

sporting camp activity along the road and above South Twin Lake did not develop until after the railroad, now the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad (B&A), opened, north from Brownville to Norcross, in 1893.³⁰ One reason for this probably related to the transportation of game. Prior to the railroad, the reasonable way to bring big game, deer, moose, and caribou, south was on a returning empty tote sled or a sled owned by an enterprising guide and there were a limited number of these. Even after the railroad opened, many sporting camps had a 5-20 mile trip to the line.

A few miles north of Brownville on the west side of the Pleasant River, Brownville Junction began to develop in 1889, when the east-west CPR crossed the rail line to KIW. The community included a second junction in 1893, when the first B&A train rolled northeast and crossed the CPR on the east side of the Pleasant River on its way north to Aroostook County. William Barrett opened one of the Junction's first two hotels, Henderson-Eureka House in 1889, and ran it for five years. He apparently sold in 1903 to Herbert T. Dillon, who renamed it, Henderson Pleasant River House, and he ran it for a few years before his older brother and wife, John E. and Mary L. Dillon, became proprietors' c.1910, and continued as such until John died in 1940.³¹ William M. Peters opened the other hotel in April 1889 knowing that most guests for his 25 rooms would be boarders. At the same time, a new store was opening, as was a roundhouse and railroad

³⁰ see note 17

³¹ Herbert remained in town as proprietor of a public hall, then a barber poolroom in the 1920s and the local theater in the 1930s, before dying in 1936. "Public hall" was a phrase he used on his marriage certificate and the U.S. Census. The degree to which his wives Agnes, then Mae, and then Mary were involved with his businesses is unknown. The hotel closed about 1961.

station to serve the line to KIW. The “Junction” was a getting off spot for those coming north on the B&A and going east on the CPR to Lake View and the sporting camps reached from there.³²

East from Prairie (North Brownville) to the camps on the Ebeemee ponds

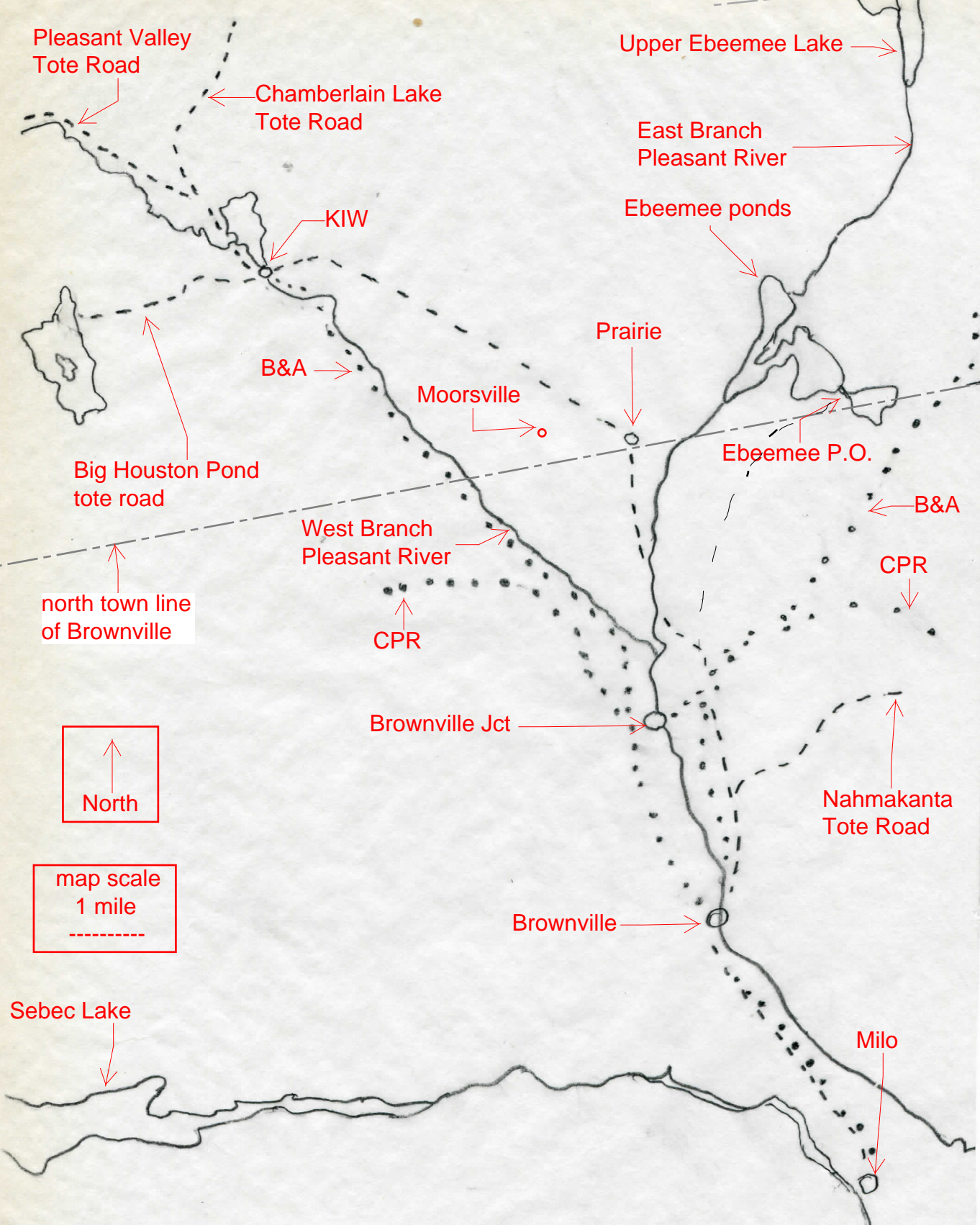
From Brownville Junction it was six miles due north on the Chamberlain Lake Tote Road to Prairie (North Brownville), where it turned west and continued over flattish country to the mouth of Silver Lake and KIW. This was the main route to KIW until 1883, when the railroad bypassed Prairie and went directly to Silver Lake. In Prairie, where the tote road bent west, a side tote road led to the East Branch of the Pleasant River at Lower Ebeemee Pond, which provided access to the five Ebeemee ponds.

About 1870, a sickly J.A. Thompson³³ came north from Bangor on the stage headed to KIW in search of a healthier environment as suggested by his physician.³⁴ By the time the stage reached Prairie, the terribly rough road forced Thompson to get off and spend a few nights resting at the local accommodations. He visited West Ebeemee Pond, decided to build a cabin, and stayed; he was one of the earliest residents. He lived here

³² Two other area establishments are mention, but no information other than the following is available. Richard’s Camp, run by Angus Richards, operated out of Brownville in 1939 and 1940. L.H. Ryder opened Elms House and ran it in 1903 and then sold to W.H. Hobbs in 1904.

³³ J.A. Thompson is Joseph A. Thompson. Typically, his name appeared as J.A. Thompson.

³⁴ Thompson, J.A., “Maine’s Highest Trout Pond,” *The Maine Sportsman*, Vol. 8 no. 94 (June 1901): 233-234.



most of the year for the next eight years, when his friend Thomas Waldo Billings, a trapper who lived in Brownville, encouraged him to join him on Long Pond. However, Thompson, who did visit regularly and occasionally used Billing's Long Pond trapper's cabin, built his own cabin on Big Houston Pond c.1880.³⁵

In Prairie, Thompson probably stayed at Freeman Wallace Tufts' farm, a ten-mile journey from Milo and a shanty stop for teamsters on Brownville's north town line. The prior owners of the successful farm were Moses and Lucy Chandler, who moved to the site after selling their boarding house in KIW (c.1853). The Tufts, who moved from their farm in Belfast before 1870, owned the four northern most farms that straddled the Chamberlain Lake Tote Road in Brownville Township by 1882. When they stopped providing accommodations is unknown; as is, when a farm in this area first began serving teamsters.³⁶

In 1894, folks getting off the stage in Prairie could spend a night at Alexander and Cora Snow Arbo's farm, on the north side of Brownville Township north town line.³⁷ Cora, born in Sebec in 1854, moved to this farm with her parents before 1860, grew up here, and in 1872 married Alexander, who was from Chesuncook. They had one child

³⁵ Rowe, Herbert W., "Across the Chairback Range," *The Maine Sportsman*, Vol. 8 no. 94 (June 1901): 230-232.

³⁶ The Tufts' stop is on *Atlas of Piscataquis County Maine 1882*. Houlton, ME: George N. Colby Company, 1882. Other information comes from the search engine Ancestry.com.

³⁷ Sawtell, William R. *Ebeemee, North Brownville, and the Prairie*. Greenville, ME: Moosehead Communications, 2006.

and worked a farm in Perham until c.1890, when they built and managed the Onawa House on Lake Onawa. After four years, they returned to work Cora's family's farm. The original home burned in 1921 and the family rebuilt it. When Alexander died in 1921, their son Paul assumed ownership, continued the farm, and soon created the famous Prairie Pavilion, a dance hall that ran through the end of the 1930s and was capable of handling 500 people.

From the Arbo's establishment guides and sports like Thompson took a branch tote road east to the outlet of Lower Ebeemee Pond, so they could paddle either northerly into West Ebeemee Pond or easterly through Pearl and Horseshoe ponds into East Ebeemee Pond. By 1882, a tote road departed from the Chamberlain Tote Road in Brownville Junction, went northeasterly, and ended at the narrows between Horseshoe Pond and East Ebeemee Pond, a location known as Ebeemee P.O..³⁸ After 1893, a trail linked this site to the B&A's East Ebeemee siding, a half-mile away. Neither of these two routes ever replaced the primary access route from Prairie.

Sporting camps on the Ebeemee ponds began to multiply in the mid-1890s. By 1895, Milo and Brownville guides, Bert F. Hobbs, Benjamin C. Harris, B.G. Stevens, G. Howard, Fred Heath, Wesley Gerrish, and Luther Rogers, each had a cabin at an undisclosed location on one of these ponds.³⁹ During fall 1897, hunters stayed at

³⁸ Colby's 1882 map (note 36) labeled the collection of homes at the end of the road as Ebeemee P.O..

³⁹ *A Guide to Maine and Aroostook County*, published by the Bangor and Aroostook R.R., 1895.

Littlefield and Twombly's sporting camp on Lower Ebeemee Pond. Exactly who built the sporting camp and in what year is unknown. This may have been the sporting camp where fishermen in January 1896 pulled in 40 pounds of pickerel in a day. By 1903, Littlefield had taken over the operation and renamed the sporting camp, Littlefield's Camp.⁴⁰

Others soon came to the pond. In summer 1899, Ed A. Chase built his cabin, Camp Barbara, on Lower Ebeemee Pond. The Chases took guests from Prairie to the landing at Lower Ebeemee dam and paddled to the sporting camp halfway up the pond on what was sometimes a point. Joining him about 1902 was Lyman Leighton, who operated Camp Maquoit on Lower Ebeemee. Leighton added a branch cabin on the southern end of Upper Ebeemee Lake in 1909 and held it through at least 1913. To reach this camp some of his sports took the B&A to Schoodic siding, where he met them for their advertised 2.5-mile walk on the Nahmakanta Tote Road to the cabin. Leighton apparently closed after 1923. The B&A train schedule did not list his sporting camp for the Ebeemee stop in 1924 and thereafter.⁴¹

In 1921, Ernest (Hank) R. Strout of Milo built a cabin with the help of his father Ernest L. Strout, a carpenter, on the northeast most point of Lower Ebeemee Pond for his

⁴⁰ *The Maine Sportsman*, Vol. 5 no. 52 (December 1897): 14. Additionally, whether this Littlefield is related to Daniel C. Littlefield who had a private cabin on Northwest Pond c.1930 is unknown. Daniel C. grew up in Waterville and died in Milo in 1960.

⁴¹ *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, July 28, 1899, p.7 and *The Maine Sportsman*, Vol. 12 no. 135 (November 1904).

personal use, but two years later, he decided to run it as a sporting camp. He began by building additional sleeping cabins, and by 1924 he, and his wife Marjorie Stanchfield, opened Strout's Trail's End Camp. The Strouts, their two sons, and Strout's father lived at the sporting camp year round until Hank built a home in Brownville so their children could attend school. Hank held other jobs in addition to his work at the sporting camp, which, as many during this time period, opened in June and closed in September. After Ernest L. Strout died in 1936, the family continued the operation until 1967, when they sold to Walter Hedberg, and four years later Paul and Caroline Roebush bought the sporting camp. After running the operation until 1978, they sold to Gene Jay, who still owned the sporting camp in 2006, but was not running it as a commercial establishment.⁴²

Those sports headed to East Ebeemee Pond had a short walk to the east side of the pond from either the B&A Ebeemee siding or the Schoodic siding after 1893. In 1906, Nelson W. McNaughton, who had a sporting camp near Schoodic siding, had a large branch camp on East Ebeemee Pond a mile and a half walk from the main sporting camp. This distance probably placed them on the pond's east side on high ground between the two low-lying areas. What became of the branch camp after the McNaughtons sold in 1915 is unknown.

⁴² Sawtell, William R. *Ebeemee, North Brownville, and the Prairie*. Greenville, ME: Moosehead Communications, 2006.

Using the Ebeemee siding as an access point, Forrest S. Drake opened Ebeemee Lake Camps, with outlying cabins, before 1912. The sporting camp was a half to three-quarters mile walk from the siding. Forrest grew up on a farm in the Brownville and Milo area, worked as a railroad agent, and married Eliza Philbrook Foss. After Eliza died in 1913, Forrest and his son, Stanley E. Drake, who also worked for the railroad, managed the sporting camp. Stanley was the sole proprietor in 1917, but then married and soon moved north to Saint Francis Plantation, where he was a land manager. Forrest, who had returned to farming, sold the sporting camp in 1919. The new owner quickly resold to Nellie Moore and Earl P. Daggett of Milo. They then sold fractional parts of the sporting camp to Carl H. Peakes, John L. Stetson, and Cecil D. Towne, all of Milo. These men apparently did not operate a commercial sporting camp, but the area was known as “Drakes.”⁴³

In 1923, Ruth Cole, as yet unmarried to Irwin W. Pike of Dover-Foxcroft, bought what was known as “Drakes” on the south shore of East Ebeemee Pond and reopened it as a sporting camp. Soon, Ruth and her brother Maurice Cole, and sister Nell Cole Downs, all of whom lived at the old Philbrook shanty as a sporting camp (c.1900-1906) when they were children, were advertising Mountain View Camps on East Ebeemee Pond.⁴⁴ As most camps of the time, they advertised fresh vegetables, eggs, butter and

⁴³ The information on the Drake operation comes from the yearly B&A publications, *In the Maine Woods*, and the website Ancestry.com.

⁴⁴ Based on the Colby map and old USGS maps, this seems to be in the area that in 1882 was Ebeemee P.O..

milk, all of which implied they had a small farm. Their access to the sporting camp was either by auto from Brownville Junction or from the Ebeemee siding. Ruth ran the sporting camp through at least 1940 according to *The Maine Register* and about that time Maurice was operating Camp Moosehorns on Northwest Pond six miles north of the Ebeemee siding near Packard's siding.⁴⁵

In addition to fishing and hunting, two of the attractions for sports in the Ebeemee area were Horserace Falls and Gauntlet Falls, both of which were on the East Branch of the Pleasant River. A tote road ran from Lower Ebeemee Pond past Horserace Falls, a 15 foot drop two miles above Upper Ebeemee Lake, and continued on to Gauntlet Falls, a 20 foot drop in a chasm another three miles upriver.

The end of the line: the Silver Lake settlement, Katahdin Iron Works

The last stage stop on the Chamberlain Lake Tote Road was KIW at the mouth of Silver Lake, 16 miles above Brownville, but the first settlers did not use that route. The Ichabod Thomas and Eben Davis families, each owning 1,000 acres in the northern half of the township, cut a road due north from Sebec in 1816 to log and farm above the head of the lake on the West Branch of the Pleasant River. By 1832, loggers had extended the Chamberlain Lake Tote Road along the south side of Silver Lake to the farms, probably one of the earliest shanty stops, as they were 10 miles beyond Prairie. When ore mining commenced a couple miles east of the mouth of Silver Lake in the mid-1840s, a

⁴⁵ *Forest and Stream*, Vol. LCV no. 4 (April 1925): 252.

settlement, KIW, formed at the outlet of Silver Lake, the families abandoned their farms for ones in Brownville, but the mine and boarding house owners moved in to maintain the open fields in support of their operations and the shanty stop shifted to KIW.⁴⁶

The KIW blast furnace first operated in 1844 and then sporadically until its last firing in 1890. The iron works employed about 100 men for 12 months, for the years it was open, and another 300 men during the winter to cut the hardwood for the kilns. During those 46 years, the community struggled financially much of the time, but logging and farming, and what eventually became a popular tourist destination hotel helped sustain its residents.

Some time in the mid-1840s, Moses Chandler, a carpenter, moved his family to the community to help build the many necessary support structures. By 1850, he, his wife Lucy, and their five children were running a boarding house with five boarders and perhaps occasional sports. Commerce in the community must have been excellent for in the mid-1850s John Pollard gave up his successful Greenville farm, moved his wife, Sarah B., and five children to KIW to take over the Chandlers' boarding house, which they renamed Katahdin Iron Works House. They also held the lease to a farm at the head

⁴⁶ A richer history of KIW is available in a number of books such as those that follow: Sawtell, William R. *K.I. III*. Bangor, ME: Furbush-Roberts Printing, 1988.

Sawtell, William R. *Katahdin Iron Works and Gulf Hagas: Before and Beyond*. Milo, ME: Milo Printing Company, nd.

Sawtell, William R. *Katahdin Iron Works Revisited*. Self published, 1983.

of the Silver Lake. Their farming success continued and by the time they left to farm in Minnesota in the late 1860s, the KIW farm was 200 acres of improved land.⁴⁷

Business at the Pollard's house, one of two boarding houses that the community eventually had, was excellent and they began to expand it with the support of the mining company who owned it. By the time the Pollards left in 1877, the structure accommodated 100 people, primarily loggers in the winter. In support of summer business, the owners recognized a financial opportunity in advertising the hotel as a summer wilderness destination point. The main attraction was the presumed healing quality of nearby Katahdin Mineral Springs, so they portrayed the house as a resort for tourists and especially for invalids.

While John Way's 1874 guidebook, the first Maine guidebook covering this area, described no sport activity in the KIW area, the large number of tourists coming to KIW and using the Katahdin Iron Works House resulted in the owner changing the name to the Silver Lake Hotel by 1877. The stage arrived on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays and went out on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. The hotel was about to also become the rendezvous point for guides meeting their sports headed to sporting camps within a 20-mile radius.

⁴⁷ *The information regarding the sequence of the hotel's ownership is from information in Sawtelle's books, Ancestry.com, The Maine Register, the B&A's In the Maine Woods, Lucius Hubbard's guide books, and the Bangor Daily Whig and Courier issues of: September 9, 1872, June 8, 1881, April 30, 1883, July 17, 1888, May 7, 1889, May 1, 1890, November 27, 1897, April 4, 1898.*

As successors to the Pollards after 1877, the hotel owners sought persons experienced in inn keeping and farming. Their first hire was Joseph C. and Sarah Herrick, who, along with their son Arthur, moved to KIW from Hudson where they had been innkeepers for at least the previous seven years and they farmed in Corinth before that.⁴⁸ After five years, the Herricks left and J.E. Harriman, who was previously at the Fort Point House in Bangor, became the manager.⁴⁹ The volume of business was sufficient to warrant more changes. He oversaw the hotel's next expansion, thoroughly renovated and refurbished it, and instituted a special Saturday stage that met folks coming on the train from Bangor to Milo and returned them to Milo early Monday. With those changes implemented, a young Henry E. Capen, who grew up on his family's farm near Dover, worked at his family's hotel business in Greenville, and was a clerk at the Mount Kineo House on Moosehead Lake, took over by 1883. He managed the hotel through its heydays of the 1880s, a time when it was fresh, attractive and easily reached by train starting in 1883.⁵⁰ The hotel continued as a popular destination for Bangor area residents and Lucius Hubbard's Maine guidebooks of the 1880s advertised Gulf Hags and the

⁴⁸ In 1882 the family moved from KIW and remained in Maine; Joseph died in Maine in 1896; by 1900 Arthur and his family were farming in White Lake South Dakota and Sarah soon followed to live with them.

⁴⁹ *Bangor Whig and Courier*, June 8, 1881.

⁵⁰ As his predecessors, Capen ran the mine's and the hotel's farm that now had 17 horses, a yoke of oxen, 7 cows, 100 sheep, and five hogs. He employed 15 farm laborers that cut 250 tons of hay and harvested 750 bushels of oats, and picked 600 bushels of potatoes and vegetables.

general area.⁵¹ Capen left the hotel in 1889, married, and by 1900 was living in Augusta, where he was the proprietor of the Augusta House.

During the height of the hotel's popularity, guests had numerous sites they visited on foot. The mineral springs were about a mile away. They walked a road to the top of nearby Saddlerock Mountain. Some took a two-day trip to the summit of White Cap Mountain following the logging tote roads up White Brook to the Gaffney logging camp and then a trail to the summit. Others went up the river to the hotel's farm, where they crossed the river on the rope ferry and followed a spotted line to the top of Chairback Mountain. Guests also hiked to the top of Horseback Mountain and into East and West Chairback Ponds, the Houston Ponds, Long Pond, Spruce Mountain Ponds, and Gulf Hags.

Beginning in 1890, the hotel business began a noticeable decline. After Capen left in 1889, the owners renovated the hotel and hired William Heugen, the B&A conductor on the KIW line, as their manager.⁵² However, by this time traffic on the Chamberlain Lake Tote Road was a fraction of what it once was. The railroad had reached Greenville in 1884 and it became the major supply hub for logging activity north of the headwaters of the East Branch of the Pleasant River. The hotel's winter business of housing

⁵¹ Hubbard, Lucius L. *Summer Vacations at Moosehead Lake and Vicinity*. Boston: A. Williams, 1879, 1880, 1882.

⁵² Heugen, born in Nova Scotia, immigrated to Maine in 1870, married his wife May, and lived in Bangor where he was a railroad conductor on the line to KIW in the 1880s. He left the Silver Lake Hotel job in 1897, went to Lake Onawa to open a sporting camp, and eventually became a hotelkeeper in Bangor.

teamsters and loggers headed north now included only those going as far as the East Branch, not far above 10-mile Shanty, the next stop north of KIW. The major impact on the community was the closing of the ironworks after the firing of the blast furnaces in 1890. This meant that during the winter seasons the hotel did not have the boarding loggers, who had cut the hardwood for the kilns each winter. Then, in 1894, the B&A extended its rail service north from Brownville to Norcross on the eastern edge of the Lower Chain Lakes (North Twin, South Twin, Pemadumcook, and Ambejejus lakes), where new wilderness hotels sprung up with views of Katahdin and steamboat rides on the lakes, a new and exciting destination point. Commerce in the community languished until 1897 when Perkins and Danforth Spoolwood Company moved into some of the iron works buildings and the hotel was again a boarding house during the logging season, but the grandeur needed to attract tourists was already lost. Fourteen years later, the spoolwood company ran out of birch to cut and left the community. The hotel was again vacant during the winter months and then burned to the ground in 1913 and no one thought it was financially feasible to rebuild. Then, nine years later, the B&A stopped train service, but left the tracks so the remaining community residents could use a jitney.

At the time the hotel burned, Albert and Sarah Green were the managers, who had taken over in 1906 from F.H. Eddy, who succeeded Heugen in 1898, and became the community's leaders until their deaths. Albert worked for the iron works until it closed, and Sarah E. McDonald came with her parents from Brownville to KIW in 1890 and then worked at the hotel. Their marriage in 1906 was a commitment to each other and to life in

KIW.⁵³ While no one ever rebuilt the hotel, Albert and Sarah opened a place for travelers to stay in the old boarding house across the street from the old hotel site and Albert began managing a nearby farm. Eventually, he either opened or reopened a local sawmill. Their boarding house burned before 1920, but, still undeterred, they continued to board people in another house. These were tough financial times in this community and those few that stayed had to be creative.

In 1929, Albert died from complications stemming from an injury at his sawmill, but Sarah continued on until 1968. Left with no income and three children, Sarah began renting her house in 1930 and served sports at her cabin, where the conditions were rustic: no electricity; guests drew water in buckets from the river, heated with a wood stove, and did their own cooking. She also had cabins on Silver Lake that she leased from Allied Chemical Corporation and rented. In 1940, she and her 16-year-old son, Harry, two of the nine year round residents left in the community, were again running a boarding house. In March 1941, she took over The Hermitage, a sporting camp up river below Gulf Hagas, and opened it yearly except 1945. In September 1941, Charlie Berry, proprietor of Yoke Pond Camps, who knew his time for running such a sporting camp was near the end, gave the operation to Sarah for a dollar with the understanding he would continue to run them, live at the site, and could reside there until his death.⁵⁴ They sold the sporting camp in 1946 and he continued to live there. She was still renting

⁵³ The life of the Green family is well documented in the Sawtelle books cited in note 46.

⁵⁴ The Skillin family, who bought the Yoke Pond Camps from Charlie, provided information.

cabins on Silver Lake and operating The Hermitage in the mid 1960s. She died in 1969 at 83 years of age.

While the popularity of the Silver Lake Hotel faded away in the 1890s, sporting camp activity picked up and remained strong for sixty years. In 1900, sports could leave Boston on a 9 a.m. train and arrive in KIW at noon the following day. KIW was the hub for sports continuing north up Big White Brook valley on the Chamberlain Lake Tote Road to B-Pond and the headwaters of the East Branch of the Pleasant River at the north end of White Cap Mountain. Other guides took their sports west on the Pleasant Valley Tote Road along the north side of the West Branch of the Pleasant River through Gulf Hagas to the sporting camps on the west side of White Cap and Barren-Chairback mountain range. Those proprietors with sporting camps in the great bowl north of Benson Mountain and on the east side of the Barren-Chairback mountain range headed south from the KIW village on the tote road to Big Houston Pond.

One aspect of KIW never changed until the 1970s. The stage road, the railroad, and then a drivable road all ended at KIW. Up until the 1930s, sporting camp proprietors on the tote roads beyond KIW met their guests in the settlement. The first drivable road access that developed for most of these establishments on the west side of the Barren-Chairback and White Cap mountain ranges came from Greenville to the west. The difficult access kept the sporting camps popular with some, but uninviting to others.

South from KIW on the tote road to Big Houston Pond

From KIW trappers, and later sports, headed south took the tote road over the west shoulders of Ore and Houston mountains to reach Little and then Big Houston ponds at the northeast edge of a great bowl. It extended six miles to the southwest to The Notch between Barren and Benson mountains, and Roaring Brook Mountain was its east boundary and the Barren-Chairback mountain range was its west edge. Before the mid-1890s this area was the domain of loggers, hunters and trappers. Some of them guided sports to their trappers' cabins, but only three of them initiated commercial establishments.

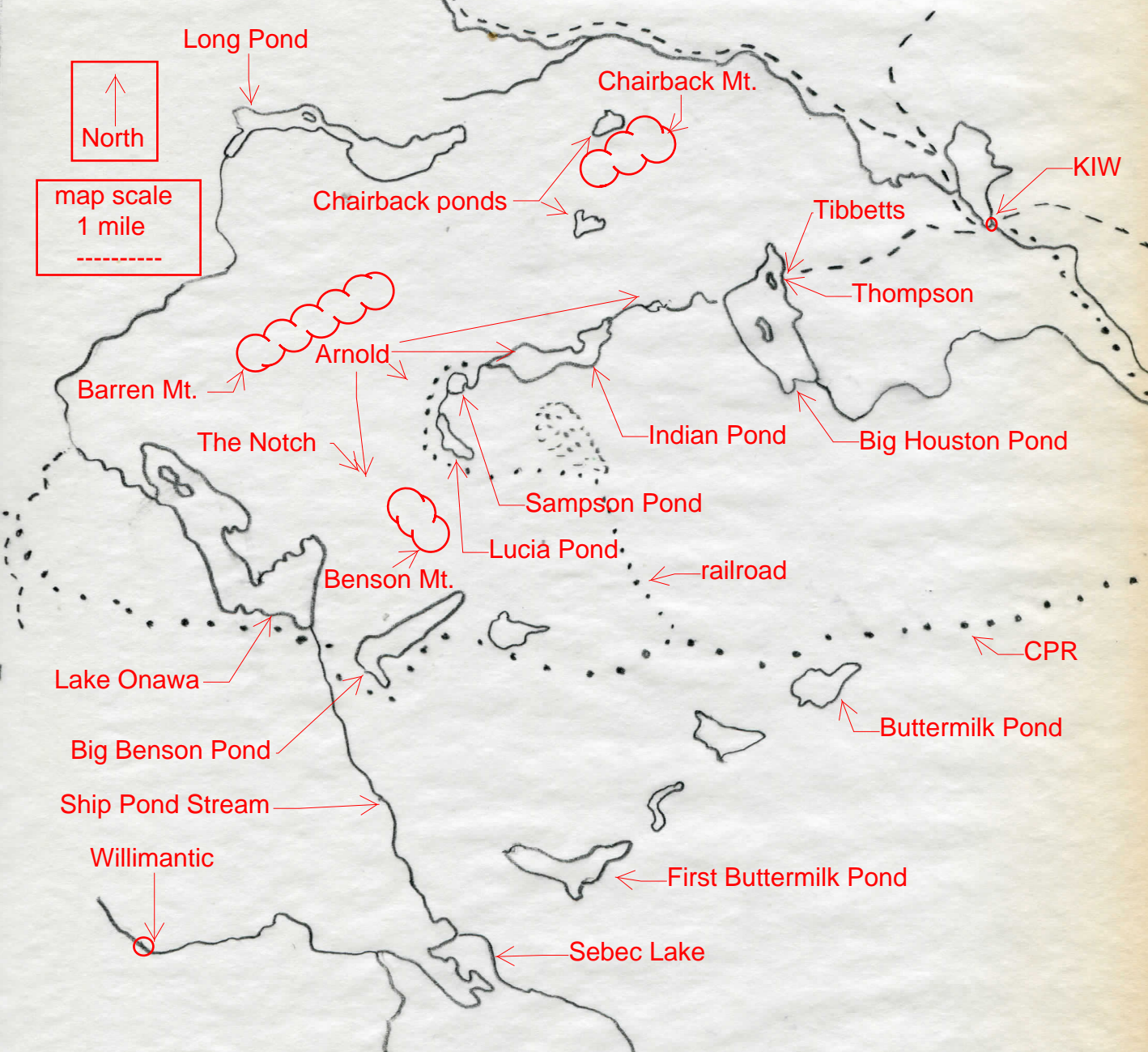
One of the early hunters and trappers in this bowl was Alonzo "Lon" Arnold of Willimantic at the west end of Sebec Lake, a short distance south of Lake Onawa. Lon (b.1854) was a commercial deer, caribou and moose hunter for the Boston market, when it was legal, and had trapper's cabins in The Notch, and another on the north side of Indian Pond in the bowl west of Big Houston Pond.⁵⁵ His route to these cabins was a trail that followed an old tote road from Lake Onawa's outlet to The Notch and then the pond. He spent a great deal of time trapping and hunting from the cabin in The Notch with his son Walter, who succeeded him as the foremost trapper in this area. When extensive logging took place in the bowl between 1912-1916, they abandoned his cabin on Indian Pond.

⁵⁵ Conservation Commission. *Willimantic, Past & Present*. 1976.

The earliest cabin on Big Houston Pond was perhaps that of Joseph A. Thompson about 1880.⁵⁶ Thompson, born in 1854 to an apparently well-to-do Bangor family in the insurance business, went to Colby College for three years, but by 1870 doctors recommended he spend time in the north Maine woods. Thompson was a small man that many thought did not look healthy enough to snowshoe boundary lines, but for much of his life that was what he did. He also checked on logging and cutting operations on behalf of landowners, of whom he was one for this township. Those who lived, guided, and worked in the wilderness townships he frequented quickly learned not to judge him by his appearances. In 1882, he married Grace P. Hersey of Bangor where they had a home, and Grace raised their only child Arthur A.. Thompson sold his undivided share of the land in 1909.

Before moving to Big Houston Pond, Thompson lived for eight plus years in a cabin on West Ebeemee Pond to the east of Prairie. Here he got to know Thomas Waldo Billings of Brownville and traveled the area with him. Billings introduced Thompson to Big Houston Pond and convinced him to build a personal cabin there. Thompson liked to walk the tote road from KIW to his cabin and he generally stopped at Little Houston Pond to catch some fish for his next meal. His cabin, Saint's Rest, was on a point of land

⁵⁶ Rowe, Herbert W., "Across the Chairback Range," *The Maine Sportsman*, Vol. 8 no. 94 (June 1901): 230-232.



North

map scale
1 mile

Long Pond

Chairback Mt.

Chairback ponds

Tibbetts

Thompson

KIW

Barren Mt.

Arnold

Indian Pond

Big Houston Pond

The Notch

Sampson Pond

Lucia Pond

Benson Mt.

railroad

CPR

Lake Onawa

Big Benson Pond

Ship Pond Stream

Willimantic

Sebec Lake

Buttermilk Pond

First Buttermilk Pond

on high ground near a peculiar ledge formation south of the landing at the end of the tote road from KIW. He named the cabin in memory of the many friends who visited.⁵⁷

From at least 1900 to 1907, Thompson often traveled with the company of his wife Grace from KIW to Big Houston Pond and then over his trail through Chairback Mountain gap past West and East Chairback Mountain ponds to Chairback Mountain Camps on Long Pond, down Long Pond and Long Pond Stream to Lake Onawa and the Young and Buxton Camps, and back to KIW.⁵⁸ They enjoyed the fishing and the visits with the sporting camp owners. It also allowed Thompson to keep track of activity within the township of which he owned an undivided share. During this same time period, he wrote articles of these trips and others for *The Maine Sportsman*.

Joining Arnold and Thompson in the bowl in the mid-1890s were individuals who started the first three commercial enterprises. Frank Tibbetts, a trapper from Milo, opened a sporting camp on Big Houston Pond; it served sports from about 1895 to 1994. Two guides from KIW, Lyn P. Moore and E.R. Robinson, along with a few men from Hampden, established a commercial St. Bernard sled dog colony and trained dog sled teams in the winter of at least 1897-1898 on Little Houston Pond. Moore and Robinson left by early 1898 for the Alaskan Klondike in search of gold, and what became of the

⁵⁷ J.A. Thompson, "Unusual Sights in Game Land," *The Maine Sportsman*, Vol. 10 no. 114 (February 1903): 111).

⁵⁸ J.A. Thompson, "Looping the Loop," *The Maine Sportsman*, Vol. 10 no. 118 (June 1903): 204, 207-208 and J.A. Thompson, "Over the Chairback Range," *The Maine Sportsman*, Vol. 11 no. 130 (June 1904): 195.

operation is unknown. In 1898, Louis Francis advertised his cabin on Upper Houston Pond, perhaps also known as Second Houston Ponds (c.1900), which drained into Big Houston Pond from the west; the duration of his enterprise is unknown.⁵⁹

The commercial enterprise that endured was the sporting camp operation, apparently initiated by Frank Tibbetts. He had been guiding out of Milo since at least 1883 and was Thompson's neighbor in 1895 when he hosted sports at some cabins on the north side of Big Houston Pond's logger's landing at the end of the tote road from KIW.⁶⁰ Moose hunters who were there in November 1895 described new log cabins, but who actually built them when is unknown.⁶¹ Tibbetts, an only child, lived with his parents on their farm in North Brownville in 1880, married in 1890, and ten years later he, his wife Winnie, and four children were farming in Milo. To what degree any other family members worked at the establishment is unknown.

Tibbetts sold the sporting camp by 1896 to Elon G. Moore, who operated them for five years. Moore, who was from the Bangor and Hampden area, had been trapping and hunting in the area for a number of years.⁶² In October 1892 he shot a caribou near the

⁵⁹ *The Maine Sportsman*, Vol.5 no. 59 (July 1898): 13.

⁶⁰ *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, December 28, 1883. Bangor and Aroostook Railroad, *A guide to Maine and Aroostook County, 1895*, mentioned the sporting camp.

⁶¹ *Forest and Stream*, Vol. LXV no. 19 (November 9, 1895): 404.

⁶² *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, December 1, 1897.

The succession of proprietors from 1895 to 1922 was based on deductive reasoning using the following sources: B&A's *In the Maine Woods* and its predecessors, *The Maine Sportsman*,

Pleasant Valley Tote Road nine miles above KIW⁶³ and he shot another one three years later.⁶⁴ Moore, who was 52 years old at the time and had a permanent residence with his wife Gratia and children in Bangor, had a store in Hermon, where he was a postmaster for a time. Moore's son, Lyndon (Lyn), helped his father in 1896, advertised his guiding in the area, and worked as a hotelkeeper two miles above Prairie in Moorsville, a community that developed around a mill not far from the road to the KIW, before he went off to Alaska for a short time (c.1898).⁶⁵ Gratia was frequently at the sporting camp with other family members, but what role she played in the sporting camp's operation is unknown. Moore left the sporting camp ownership in 1901, but continued to reside in KIW Township through at least 1909; he may have been living with his son at his farm in the Moorsville settlement. He died in 1916 in Hampden.

Between 1901 and 1910 the sporting camp operation went through a succession of five owners. John S. and Mattie Arnold of Brownville followed Moore and their son, William, guided for them.⁶⁶ John was a farmer and a logging camp boss for lumbermen cutting in the region. The Arnolds used the original structure as a dinning and cooking

Bangor Daily Whig and Courier, *The Maine Register*, the sporting camp's guest book (see note 73), and Ancestry.com.

⁶³ *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, October 4, 1892.

⁶⁴ *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, October 9, 1895.

⁶⁵ *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, January 27, 1899.

⁶⁶ The John Arnold family was not related to the Alonzo (Lon) Arnold family of Willimantic. William (Lell) Llewellyn Arnold was John's son and Walter Llewellyn Arnold was Lon's son. The two sons, who often used the same signature, "W.L. Arnold," were friends. Walter's respect for Lell was evident in his description of him; "a man who had spent his life in the woods."

camp and added four other small sleeping cabins, Porcupine Lodge, Camp Anthony, and two others.⁶⁷ When the Arnold cabins were full, they had permission from Thompson to use his cabin. During the Arnold's second year, they frequently saw a full-grown albino bull moose feeding at the pond.⁶⁸

When Mattie died in 1903 John sold to A.A. Huntington and moved to KIW, where in 1910 he was boarding at Albert and Sarah Green's hotel. Huntington was perhaps Aurill A., who was born and grew up farming in the Orneville and North Bradford area, just below Milo. By 1900, he and his wife Blanche and their children moved from their Bradford farm to Hudson to manage a hotel near the B&A. Their married son and his wife, former managers of Attean Pond Camps near Jackman, joined them at the sporting camp. They were able to keep the same arrangement with Thompson for the use of his cabin and they built two more cabins in close proximity to his.⁶⁹

The Kittridge brothers of Milo took over the operation from Huntington. They were probably the sons of Benjamin R. and Amelia Kittridge. Benjamin was a carpenter and carriage maker who was born in Milo in 1850. Their five sons were Albert F., Frank P., Fred M., Clinton, and Melvin. All of them except Clinton, a teacher, were carpenters. Albert, Frank and Fred were probably the ones who ran the sporting camp; Clinton was

⁶⁷ Rowe, Herbert W., "Across the Chairback Range," *The Maine Sportsman*, Vol. 8 no. 94 (June 1901): 230-232.

⁶⁸ *Daily Kennebec Journal*, September 9, 1902.

⁶⁹ Most of the information on the Huntington ownership came from the following: Thompson, J.A., "Over the Chairback Range," *The Maine Sportsman*, Vol. 11 no.130 (June 1904): 195.

only a young teenager at the time. Frank was familiar with the area and had met Thompson in 1898, when they were both fishing Little Houston Pond.⁷⁰

Joe M. Patten took over from the Kittridge brothers c.1908 and sold two years later to Lyndon “Lyn” P. Moore who had previously guided at the sporting camp during his father’s ownership, and was now living at his farm and hotel in nearby Mooresville.⁷¹ Moorsville had a small mill and Moore’s hotel might have been the boarding house for mill workers. After they sold the sporting camp in 1921, they returned to Moorsville, where they resided as retirees until the early 1930s, when they moved to Orono.⁷²

While the sporting camp had many owners between the 1890s and 1920, they retained a steady business and were generally open year round. In January 1897, Moore housed 24 birch choppers at the sporting camp while he trapped.⁷³ Most of the guests were Mainers.⁷⁴ The owners were all local people who, along with their families, had been coming to the sporting camp to fish and hunt and continued to come once they gave up their ownership. After the early 1920s, most of the sports were from outside Maine.

⁷⁰ Thompson, J.A., “Unusual Sights in Game Land,” *The Maine Sportsman*, Vol. 10 no. 114 (February 1903): 111.

⁷¹ Marriage certificate, Ancestry.com

⁷² Lyn was not related to the Moores who had cabins at Big Benson Pond, Borestone Mountain, and Lake Onawa.

⁷³ “Big Houston Camps, KI Works, ME 1896-1939” (guest book), available at University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections.

⁷⁴ This conclusion came after reading the “Big Houston Camps guest book 1896-1939;” see note 73.

In the 1920s, the sporting camp opened for fishing and closed at the end of hunting season.

William Llewellyn (Lell) Arnold, son of previous owner John S. Arnold, and his wife Winifred ran the sporting camp from 1922 until 1947, when they retired to their home in Bangor. Prior to buying the sporting camp the couple lived in Houlton where Lell was a forester for Great Northern Paper Company and Winifred, a Cornell University graduate, taught German in the high school. The Arnolds spent a great deal of the year at the sporting camp.⁷⁵ They typically closed up and left by the end of December and one or both of them were back in mid to late March and generally no later than mid-April. When they came in April 18, 1929, they had to snowshoe all the way. Area hunter and trapper Walter Llewellyn Arnold cut ice for them the winter of 1932, so they may have cut their own in other years.⁷⁶ In 1938 and 1939, they had Roland Scott Emery, an area guide and former sporting camp owner at Long Pond stay at the sporting camp all winter.⁷⁷

By 1925 the sporting camp complex and its offerings had grown substantially. The sporting camp included 15 structures, among which were a dining and main lodge, and

⁷⁵ Camp guest book; see note 73.

⁷⁶ Camp guest book; see note 73.

⁷⁷ Camp guest book; see note 73.

eight sleeping cabins with a living room and two bedrooms.⁷⁸ Some guests liked staying in tents that Lell pitched on platforms. He maintained a lean-to at West Chairback Pond, a favorite fishing spot for guests. Canoes and boats were on each of the area ponds, Little Houston, Indian, West and East Chairback, Dam, Camp, and South, and the West Branch of the Pleasant River, to support fishing and pleasure canoeing. Lell arranged multi-day guided fishing trips to Greenwood Pond on White Cap Mountain. Guides were not necessary to travel to the other ponds, all of which were a short distance away on a marked trail.

The sporting camp's promotional brochures during the Arnold years contained several points of emphasis not found in those of other sporting camps.⁷⁹ The pond had good swimming and the Arnolds maintained 20 miles of walking trails that provided access to viewpoints like those on Round and Houston mountains. They also arranged one to five day hiking trips for sports. In 1933, Lell guided the first group of hikers, all women, over the new Appalachian Trail (AT) to Mount Katahdin (August 22 to September 3).⁸⁰

⁷⁸ A great deal of the information pertaining to the 1920s came from: Bliss, George S., personal journal for Big Houston Pond trips (1925, 1926, 1927, 1929). Unpublished personal documents found at Moosehead Historical Society, Greenville, Maine.

⁷⁹ Arnold, William Llewellyn. "Arnold Camps / Big Houston Pond" promotional brochures of 1925, 1926, 1930, 1935, 1938, 1940. Documents found at Moosehead Historical Society, Greenville, Maine.

⁸⁰ "Map of the Conquest of Katahdin," Maine Memory Network, Maine Historical Society, Portland, Maine.

During the Lell years, sports arrived at the camp from a couple different directions. To reach the sporting camp through c.1942, some guests spent the night at the Dillion House in Milo and others took the train to Brownville Junction where they transferred to the jitney for a ride to KIW. Lell met them in KIW with a cart and horse team for a ride over the final three miles to the sporting camp.⁸¹ Beginning in 1934, some guests arrived at the sporting camp on a side trail from the AT; the trail was the same one that Joseph A. Thompson used to reach West and East Chairback and Long ponds 30 years earlier. The trail descended from the saddle north of Third Mountain to West Chairback Pond and down to Arnold's landing at the northeast corner of Big Houston Pond. When the trail was abandoned is unknown, but the last AT guide to list the trail was that of 1953.

After the 1947 season, the Arnolds sold to Charles H. MacDonald of Brownville and Bangor who owned the establishment for the next three years.⁸² He hired Angus MacDonald (not a relative) to run the sporting camp and perform the guiding services. Angus met guests in KIW and drove them to the site in a four-wheel drive WWII surplus ambulance. Charles emigrated to the United States of America from Canada in 1900, lived in Brownville where he worked in the railroad office and then served in WWI. Ten years later he was a supervisor in a Bangor based life insurance business, from which he retired in 1955.

⁸¹ see note 79

⁸² Andrews, Delmont. "Big Houston Revisited," *The Pine Cone*, Spring 1950: 34-37.

John P. Grosvenor purchased the sporting camp in 1950, opened it to sports in 1951, and with the help of his family ran it for the next ten years.⁸³ It included a main dining room and lodge and eight sleeping cabins for two to six people. The old J.A. Thompson cabin was part of the lease. At the time of his purchase, John, who was born and raised in Brownville, was working for the U.S. Army Transportation Corps at Fort Williams in Cape Elizabeth. His mother, who lived in Brownville, died that same year and left her home to John and his sister. His inheritance made it possible for him to realize his dream of running a sporting camp. Clara, John's wife, did the cooking and housekeeping. Their daughter Florence, who boarded in Brownville for the school year, waited on tables a couple years during her summer vacation. They hired help during the busiest times that were generally early fishing season and hunting season. In winter, John went in to cut firewood and ice, and shovel the snow off the roofs. They tried maintaining a garden the first year, but animals ate most everything. During their first year, they continued to use the old ambulance to reach the sporting camp, but they soon replaced it with two jeeps.

The Grosvenors used Willie Jackson of Bangor and Veazie to do some guiding for the sporting camp beginning about 1953 and that initiated a relationship with the sporting camp that lasted until 1986.⁸⁴ He and his wife Becky spent time at the sporting camp and their married son Elwyn and his wife were there in 1959, when she was pregnant with his

⁸³ Florence Grosvenor provided information for this time period.

⁸⁴ Sherrie Patterson provided much of the information about the Jackson family years.

granddaughter Sherrie. A couple years later Mr. Kitchen (Ketchen) of Veazie, perhaps a friend of the Jacksons, purchased the camp, and a year later the main lodge burned to the ground. Not many years later, Jackson, who owned Jackson Boat Company in Veazie, bought the sporting camp, continued its commercial operation until the late 1970s, and then used it as a private camp until October 1986. The Jackson family was at the sporting camp during the camp season, which was fishing season through hunting season.

A number of structural changes occurred during the Jackson years. To replace the main lodge Jackson built a new stick-frame structure about 100 yards from the pond's shore at the northwest corner of his lot. The structure, situated so the family had a good view of the pond, had a basement, a gathering space for guests, and living space for his family. Past owners had planted the apples trees just below it. He added cooking facilities to Cozy Cabin, which was near the shore, and Ledge Lodge, which set beyond the Thompson cabin on the prominent ledge overlooking the pond. The old Thompson cabin was also refurbished, but it always had cooking facilities. He did not maintain Honeymoon Camp, which was on the uphill side of the road between the new lodge and Ledge Lodge, and it had disintegrated by 1986. The balance of the eight sleeping cabins Jackson initially had dwindled to Cozy Cabin (four beds), Ledge Lodge and the old Thompson cabin by 1986. He replaced some of the lost space by building Big Camp, a stick-frame duplex type abode with kitchens and bathrooms and capable of sleeping ten; it was near the pond on the south side of the landing.

Jackson liked the sporting camp's remoteness, which he enhanced by purposely not improving the access road and providing transportation from the KIW gatehouse to the site. The road was also gated at the West Branch of the Pleasant River bridge. The only way anyone was able to get to the sporting camp was by four-wheel drive, snowmobile, or walking. Jackson's granddaughter Sherrie and her sister often walked the road to the sporting camp because it was quicker than riding in the truck. In the late 1950s or early 1960s, Jackson bought a vehicle that had a track on the bottom that he might have used during the winter. His guests drove to the K.I.W gatehouse and parked. Jackson came out to meet them at the previously arranged time and drove them in. Sometimes guests stayed at the Jackson house in Veazie and the next morning they all drove up together to the sporting camp. Over time some of the guests became more like family and made the trip once or twice a year.

By the late 1970s, the Jacksons stopped running a commercial operation, but the family continued to frequent the sporting camp in both summer and winter. One summer day, Jackson's granddaughter Sherrie arrived at the sporting camp and got excited when she spotted a Coca-Cola cooler down in the middle of the field. Her first thought was her grandpa must be rich to have a cooler full of coke in the woods. She ran to the cooler, which was set in a little cold stream that ran from the mountain, and, to her great disappointment, only her grandpa's live fish bait was inside. Sherrie also enjoyed riding the snow machines the family members bought c1970 so they could come in winter weekends for a stay and ride around the area.

Jackson sold the lease to Wayne and Ester Hardwick in October 1986 and they reopened the site as a sporting camp for the next six years.⁸⁵ Wayne had been a lobsterman for 20 or so years and wanted to try something different, so, along with their son Dennis, they made the sporting camp their new year-round home. Soon after moving in, Dennis obtained his guide's license and some time later his father did likewise. At the time of their purchase, the sporting camp included only a main lodge, Ledge Lodge, and three other structures, Big Camp, Cozy Cabin, and Thompson Camp, each with sleeping, cooking, and dining space. The buildings had broken windows, doors, steps and porches, and leaking roofs, all of which the Hardwicks repaired in order to keep them functional. They left the main lodge with its green color, but painted both the blue colored Cozy Cabin and the yellow Big Camp brown to match Ledge Camp, which had a yellow and red door. Wood stoves heated the cabins and the appliances ran on gas; they did not have an electrical generator. Their garden the first year feed the deer and they did not attempt another.

The Hardwicks lived in the main lodge, the new structure above the old orchard and the center of their operation, where they developed their routines that changed with the seasons. The basement had the gravity fed spring that served them and the two cabins below their home. During the winter, they hauled all water, propane, wood and other materials to guests at the cabins on plastic sleds. Mrs. Hardwick did the laundry by hand and learned that trying to do it when it was below 16 degrees Fahrenheit was a waste of

⁸⁵ Conversations with Ester Hardwick were the sources for information on the Hardwick years.

time. The heat of the wood stoves was her dryer. In the winter, the refrigerators froze everything, so the porch became the freezer and coolers kept meat and milk from freezing. When spring and warmer weather came, they collected shale ice from the lake for the coolers. In preparation for each winter, they cut and split by hand seven cords of wood going through numerous wedges, mauls and splitting mauls. The sporting camp had no phone or radio contact, but they did have a radio for news and weather. During the days, there was always work to do, but in the evenings, they played cards and read. In the winter both, Wayne and Dennis trapped. Once a week, someone went out to Brownville to get the mail and check on reservations.

At the time they moved in, the old road from KIW up over Ore Mountain to the sporting camp was in terrible shape, but that was not the only transportation challenge. Instead of trying to use the old road, they took a newer road that swung above the north end of the pond, walked a short trail to a boat landing, and took a boat to their home. They did not offer a shuttle service from KIW to the site so guests drove the same route. When they arrived at the landing, they struck a large gong that hung from a tree and the family came to the landing to help. They moved gear and foodstuffs in wheelbarrows for the short walk from the parking to the lake's shore. The wheelbarrows were tippy and more than once groceries spilled out. As soon as the lake started to freeze and snow covered the road, their walk from the sporting camp to where they left their truck ranged from a half to three miles and took up to two hours. Where they could leave their truck depended on the plowing by the paper company. For the first three years, they

snowshoed to and from the sporting camp, and one of those seasons they could never park closer than KIW. For their final three years they used a snow machine. The safety of the ice could be a problem for as much as six weeks in both the fall and the spring. During mud season and for a month late each fall, they always had to walk in from KIW.

Unlike many sporting camps the Hardwicks were open for business year round. The two most popular times for sports were ice fishing and spring fishing. Since their lease included the right to all the registered bear bait sites in the surrounding area, many bear hunters, came in the fall and were generally successful. The summer was the slowest time and those who came simply relaxed and did not do much wandering around. The Hardwicks took interested guests to visit the ledges on the other side of the pond. Here, in the deep narrow slits in the rock, ice remained for much of the summer and they named the site “polar caves.” Folks did visit Gulf Hagas and used the boats on South, Lost, and Little Houston ponds. Many of their guests returned each year and others learned of the sporting camp through their advertising in newspapers like *Piscataquis Observer* and their participation in the Maine Sportsman Shows in Augusta.

The Hardwicks sold to Massachusetts’s residents Richard and Julie Neal who moved in to take over the operation in October 1992. Richard, a builder, and Julie, a teacher, came with their children, Willy 16, Tom 12, and Forrest 5, with the vision of combining their assets with what they would make from the sporting camp operation and

establish the site as their home.⁸⁶ They had customers, but ultimately not as many as they needed to make things work out for them financially, so they closed in October 1994.

The sporting camp era on Big Houston Pond ended when the Neals moved out. Wayne Bosowicz, who ran the successful Foggy Mountain Guide Service of Sebec and specialized in bear hunting, probably took on the lease for the primary reason that it included all the bear trap sites in the area. Both the Hardwicks and the Neals had enabled him to use those registered sites. However, he apparently did not operate the sporting camp as his predecessors had. Richard Riemersma bought both the land and the structures in May 2003, and as of May 2016 little was left of the structures. The only remains of the cabin on the ledge were bricks and some roofing materials. No evidence other than a level area was at the site of the main lodge. The Thompson cabin was no longer standing. The other abandoned structures had badly leaking roofs, unsafe porches, smashed windows, and separating sidewalls.

For some unknown reason the proprietors and sports at Big Houston Pond seldom traveled south to the many ponds in the bowl, which was primarily the domain of Alonzo Arnold and his son Walter, who spent his whole life in this bowl.⁸⁷ Joining them was a Willimantic friend, Walter Green, who had a cabin on Indian Pond from 1922 until at least 1927; what became of it is unknown. The only other known early structure in the

⁸⁶ Information on the Neal ownership came from written exchanges with Richard Neal.

⁸⁷ Much of the information about Arnold's activity in this bowl comes from reading his "Personal Journals 1919-1976" at the University of Maine Fogler Library, Special Collections.

bowl was a small hunter's cabin four men had on the southeast shore of Indian Pond in 1929.⁸⁸ No other structures in the bowl, other than those built by Arnold for his use, appeared before c.1960, and after that he built the three cabins on Indian Pond for three different families.

Most of Arnold's life was centered on Willimantic where he was born in 1894. He worked the logging operations c.1916 at the Indian Pond. In 1917-1918, he managed the goatherd at the Moore fox farm on nearby Borestone Mountain.⁸⁹ For years he guided for Packards Camps at the west end of Sebec Lake, a day's walk for him to Indian Pond. Arnold married his wife Marcia in the 1920s, and they, along with Marcia's son Ronald Freeman resided in Willimantic, where they had a daughter Elaine in 1936 and adopted a son Andrew Ashe Jr. in 1937. His children often fished with him on Sebec Lake and accompanied him to his trapper's cabins for overnight stays. Arnold also developed and ran his popular and successful trapping supply business from Willimantic.

Arnold had a curiosity for the land between Willimantic and the Canadian border. His fishing interests frequently took him north to the West Branch of the Penobscot River, Nesowadnehunk Stream, and the lakes and ponds to the east of Moosehead Lake. His knowledge of the territory between Lake Onawa and Yoke Pond at the head of the Barren-Chairback and White Cap mountain ranges influenced his Willimantic neighbor,

⁸⁸ This structure not mentioned by Walter in his journals, but reference to it appears in *The Maine Sportsman*.

⁸⁹ Other Arnold information came from his obituary, *Bangor Daily News*, July 8, 1980, a copy of which is with his personal papers at the University of Maine Fogler Library, Special Collections.

New York City Broadway actor Walter Green, to hire him in August 1922 as a guide for a journey from Lake Onawa to Yoke Pond.⁹⁰ They went through the Notch to Green's new cabin at the narrows on Indian Pond, poled a raft down the pond, found the abandoned trail to Big Houston Pond, crossed it in a canoe and walked into KIW, then up the West Branch to The Hermitage, where they stayed two nights so Greene could explore Gulf Hagas. Their next stops were at the sporting camps at Long Pond, Little Lyford Ponds, First West Branch Pond and then Yoke Pond. Perhaps Green was already thinking about a trail through this area. The one he cut c.1933 was the Appalachian Trail. Beginning August 23, 1926, Arnold made his first Allagash trip pulling out at Fort Kent on September 3rd. Other such trips followed in subsequent years.

Trapping expertise, which Arnold began to develop in his youth, became his forte. By the time Arnold was 20 years old, he had established trap lines and built his first trapper's cabins. When the logging was taking place around Indian Pond (1912-1917), he trapped from the Notch Camp, the cabin at Camp Pond, and 3rd Camp that was probably at Third Buttermilk Pond. One typical early route was from Willimantic to Notch Camp to Third Buttermilk Pond (3rd Camp) and down through the watershed to Bucks Cove at the west end of Sebec Lake and close to his home in Willimantic.

Once the loggers left the bowl c.1917, Arnold built more trapper's cabins in the area. One was on the west side of Lucia Pond and "Camp Hermit Crunch" was at the foot

⁹⁰ The information for this trip came from: "Walter Green and Walter Arnold trip journal 1922," which is part of Walter Llewellyn Arnold Personal Papers that are at University of Maine Fogler Library, Special Collections.

of Caribou Bog. A few miles above Big Houston Pond on the stream from Indian Pond, he and his young trapper friend, Bill Gourley, also of Willimantic and a guide for Packards in the late 1920s and 1930s, built a cabin at the head of Camp Pond on the north side. One year when they were making home brew, they accidentally burned the roof off the cabin. They replaced it by going up the watershed to Raytown, an abandoned logging mill community at the head of the watershed near Ray Pond, and disassembled a roof of a still standing structure.⁹¹ They took the roof logs across the peat bog to the head of Indian Pond, towed them down the pond into Dam Pond and either drove them down the brook or hauled them on the tote road that passed on the north side of Camp Pond before reaching the northwestern corner of Big Houston.

Arnold and Gourley coordinated their trapping efforts for many years, shared trapper's cabins and somehow they timed their trips so their paths only crossed. Influencing only one man at a time at the tiny cabins was that Gourley's wife Katherine, who worked at Packards and married him in October 1937, traveled with him during the trapping season and skinned out the animals. However, at Camp Comfort Arnold often set up a tent to accommodate extra persons or women, and the two men sometimes enjoyed a night together here. They also shared a cabin reached from the east most cove of Silver Lake at the foot of Saddlerock Mountain. Arnold had a canoe hidden on the west shore of the lake and they both used it to reach the east cove. The two men ran separate trap lines in geographically different areas that could be served by one cabin.

⁹¹ John Leathers provided this information in an interview.

Arnold's trap lines were primarily on the east side of the Barren-Chairback mountain range, and a number of Gourley trap lines in the 1960s were on the west side of the range, where he was able to arrange for his use of one of the structures of Little Lyford Camps. While the Gourley's moved from Willimantic to own and operate Schoodic Lake Camps from 1940 to 1971, the two continued to trap in the winter.

Some years after the woods in the bowl began to recover from the logging, he abandoned the cabin at Camp Pond in favor of Camp Comfort that he built c.1945 close to a stream that came off the Barren-Chairback mountain range and not too far west of Boot Pond. By this time the Notch Camp was not in good shape, but he had no need for it with Camp Comfort. Arnold spent considerable time at Camp Comfort until 1952, when he built a small cabin, Camp Morish, at the site on Indian Pond where his father had had a cabin on the north side. He reused the door and windows from Camp Comfort and outfitted the cabin with a gas refrigerator in 1955. In addition to the smaller cabin, he laid out the foundation for a larger cabin that he finished in the late 1950s.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s Arnold made some life altering decisions that allowed to him to live in the environment he wanted and do what he loved most. On October 6, 1959 Arnold returned to Camp Morish to live year-round by himself and to continue to trap and pick spruce gum. Three years later, he sold his successful trapping supply related business to his close friend Oscar Cronk. Rather than going out for supplies, he arranged for them and his mail to come in by a float or ski plane every few weeks. He rarely left his beloved wilderness and at one point did not go out for three

years and 10 months. To leave was to walk his trail from Willimantic or fly by floatplane or, after 1973, go out by vehicle on a logging road cut north of his camp. Arnold had his first floatplane ride in 1947, when Terris Moore, who had a cabin on Borestone Mountain, landed on the pond to fish and offered Arnold a ride.

Arnold had friends who came in to see him, three new ones joined him on Indian Pond and others looked out for his well being in other ways. A distant relative of his, John Leathers, a game warden, brought to and left with him a fawn he raised. Susie frequented Arnold's dooryard for three years. After a year she went off and came back pregnant, and after the fawn was born, Susie would never let it into the cabin's yard. Suzie came back a third year, but then never returned.⁹² One of those individuals looking out for Arnold was Charlie Cole who flew in his supplies. Cole got nervous because he had not been able to land for six weeks; Arnold set out markers when the ice was at the appropriate thickness. He buzzed the cabin and airdropped supplies. Unfortunately the hard landing mixed such thing as flour and soap. Arnold met the family that would be his first neighbor on the pond in the early 1960s, when he was paddling on the Indian Pond. He noticed the Dick and Jane Harriman family of Bucksport camped in a buggy area, got to know them, and built them a cabin in 1962 on what Arnold called Brown Jug Point.

⁹² Oscar Cronk was the source for additional information in the post 1950 era.

The Harriman family and Arnold remained close friends until he died and still retain the cabin he built for them.⁹³

About 1961, Arnold had a visitor, Arthur Allgrove, who came by floatplane specifically to meet him and see if they might be compatible neighbors on Indian Pond.⁹⁴ The Allgroves were well acquainted with Maine sporting camps; Arthur guided for the Molunkus Lake Sporting Camps in 1957-1958 and his son Bruce worked there as a summer helper. Bruce, who attended Higgins Classical School in Charleston, met and became friends with fellow student Jack Packard, from Packards Camps on Sebec Lake. Jack and his family, friends of Arnold, suggested Indian Pond and that the Allgroves fly in to meet and talk with Arnold. They all liked one another, and Arnold helped them secure a lease and then built them a cabin in 1962. The Allgroves used the cabin four or five times each summer and still retain it in 2016.

In the mid 1970s, Walter built a cabin for Maurice Sleeper from Connecticut. The Sleepers first used a cabin Arnold built on Dam Pond. Without the impoundment of the dam, access from the water was difficult. Perhaps for that reason, Walter built a cabin for them at the head of Indian Pond, where the old logging railroad from the Canadian Pacific Railroad (CPR) at Kuroki Siding via Raytown ended. No one ever used the cabin

⁹³ Arnold's "Personal Journals 1919-1976" at the University of Maine Fogler Library, Special Collections.

⁹⁴ Bruce Allgrove provided the information on the Allgrove family's experience and the Sleeper cabin.

at Dam Pond again. Since the Sleeper ownership, Jerry West from New Jersey acquired the cabin.

The Harrimans, Allgroves, and Sleepers were people Arnold enjoyed and he looked after of their cabins in their absence. His journal writing suggests they were fond of him, often bringing in unasked for items and leaving foodstuffs for him on their departures. As he aged and slowed, they watched out for him. In his last year or so at the cabin, the Harrimans in particular looked after him and helped take care of him. He resided in his cabin until he became so lame in the late 1970s that he could not move about and went to stay with his friend Oscar Cronk. He died in 1980.

Either Walter or his children passed the cabin on to Wendy Shaw a close friend of Walter and frequent visitor at the cabin. Her son, James Shaw, inherited the cabin.

North from KIW on the Chamberlain Lake Tote Road

Back in KIW another five sporting camp owners met their sports at the Silver Lake hotel and traveled north on the Chamberlain Lake Tote Road to reach their sites. Charles Randall opened a sporting camp on First West Branch Pond in 1881; a 20 mile journey. Eph Gerrish advertised his sporting camp as 12 miles from KIW on the south shore of B-Pond in the late 1880s. Charlie Berry and Jack Caughlin had a sporting camp at Yoke Pond c.1892; a 17 mile journey. In 1897, someone, perhaps one of these men or one of the other KIW guides, like H.A. McDonald (1894-1898) or Bert Peabody (1898), had a rough sporting camp, called “Hotel Spruce” at Spruce Mountain Ponds six to eight miles from KIW via a path up the mountain from 10 Mile Shanty, the next stop north of

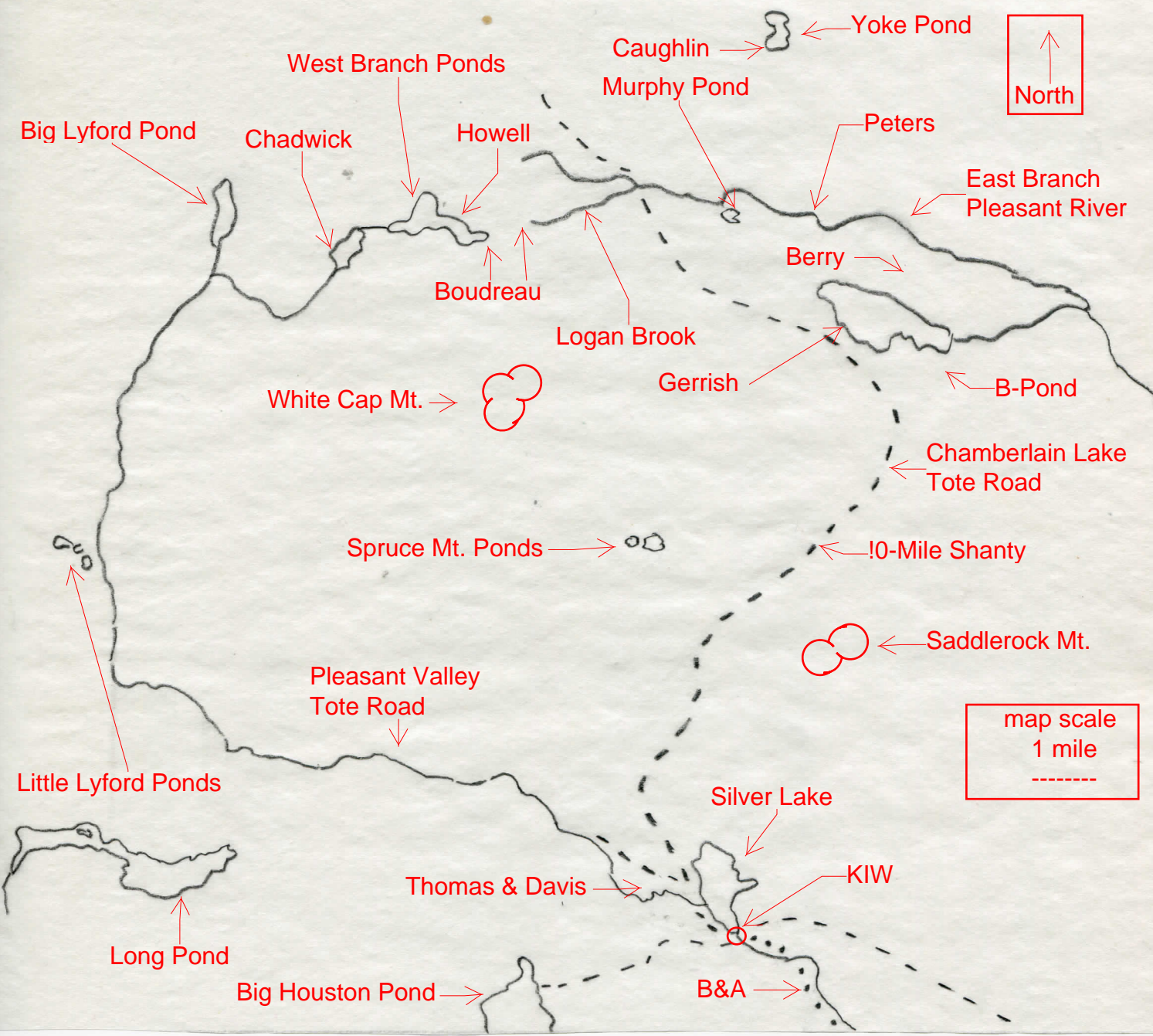
KIW.⁹⁵ A man by the name of Cochran had what was reported as Cochran's Camp at an unknown location on B-Pond from the late 1890s until at least 1903.⁹⁶

Charles Randall did not travel the Chamberlain Lake Tote Road, discover a nice place for a sporting camp and decide to set up such an operation. In 1879, he accompanied his father, Phillip H. Randall, on a hike to First West Branch Pond, probably from their sporting camp at Little Lyford Pond, to hunt moose. They found an abandoned logging camp at the pond's western most cove, took it over, fixed it up as a personal hunting cabin and called it Moose Camp. Two years later Charles was running it as a sporting camp. By 1890, he had added three sleeping cabins and, in 1897, he had a total of six, and could sleep and feed 30-35 guests at a time.⁹⁷ To help feed their guests the sporting camp had a garden and chickens, and pastured cows and horses. The large numbers meant Charles also hired additional help. In the mid to late 1890s, 18-year-old Edgar Sherburne, who would eventually own the sporting camp at nearby Little Lyford Ponds, helped with chores and Martin Conley, 60 years old in 1895, and Eugene Robinson guided. To what extent Charles' wife Flora and children Roy, Doris, and Elsie participated in the operation is unknown, other than his son Roy guided. The family

⁹⁵ *The Maine Sportsman*, Vol. 5 no. 51 (November 1897): 9.

⁹⁶ *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, February 11, 1899, p.8.

⁹⁷ A great deal of information on this sporting camp came from Eric Stirling and Rosemary James, both of the Chaddwick family tree and *Hidden in the Woods: The Story of Kokad-jo* (Greenville, Me: Moosehead Communications, 1977) by Shirley Duplessis.



retained a permanent residence in Milo, where they also had a farm, and lived in the off-season.

During the Randall years, the route to the sporting camp varied. Initially, the best road, due to its yearly high traffic, was the Chamberlain Lake Tote Road to the Logan Brook area and a short side-trail to Third West Branch Pond where travelers switched to canoes for the last leg of the 20-mile journey. Randall also began to use a slowly improving route from KIW along the West Branch of the Pleasant River, but its condition varied radically based on logging operations. By 1900, the family's guides like Eugene Robinson in fall 1899 met the guests at KIW and used this 19-mile rough route along the river, Pleasant Valley Tote Road, to reach the sporting camp.⁹⁸ At the same time, some guests started coming in via an even longer route from Greenville, where they took a steamer up Moosehead Lake to Lilly Bay, a buckboard to Kokadjo, a boat to South Inlet on First Roach Pond, and lastly a buckboard to the sporting camp. The trip may have been long, but, if the lakes were reasonably calm, it could be a smooth ride and little to no walking. In the 1930s, guests could reach a parking area near the sporting camp by vehicle from Greenville via the French Town Road that the CCC constructed to the end of South inlet. From here a Hollingsworth and Whitney Company logging road brought them close enough for a final short walk or buckboard ride to the sporting camp.

The sporting camp's remoteness presented numerous challenges. Those present on September 27, 1895, when Martin Conley was unloading a canoe at the sporting camp

⁹⁸ *The Maine Sportsman*, Vol. LIII no. 24 (December 9, 1899): 471.

and a gun accidentally discharged hitting him in the shoulder, learned one lesson in remoteness.⁹⁹ As Randall and others moved Conley to a bed and began attending to him, Randall's assistant, Edgar Sherburne, headed down the tote road along the river to KIW, the closest telegraph station, to summon a doctor from Milo. He went by foot, as being the fastest means, and reached KIW four hours later. By the time the doctor reached KIW, it was dark, but they took a horse cart to the foot of Gulf Hagas and walked the next seven miles to Little Lyford Camps in the dark. At first light, after a short night's rest, they continued by foot the next seven miles to tend to Conley.

The remoteness also provided a challenge not only to the Randalls and their guides, but their sports, nearly all of whom wished to take their game home. In the fall of 1899, one group of hunters shot a 700-pound moose four or five miles from the sporting camp.¹⁰⁰ Their guide made sure they were near an old tote road when they shot the animal. After shooting it, the men built a sled, and cleared a sled path to the old tote road. Then, they had to remove the deadfall and brush from the unused tote road. Finally, they went back to the sporting camp to retrieve a horse to pull the sled. It took two days to get the moose out. Furthermore, each member of the party shot his full complement of deer (three per person). The Randalls were then responsible for hauling all of the carcasses from the sporting camp to KIW. In 1902, they hauled out a sport's

⁹⁹ *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, October 1, 1895.

¹⁰⁰ "Maine Big Game," *Forest and Stream*, Vol. LIII no. 23 (December 2, 1899): 477.

moose that had a rack spread of 52 inches with 20 points; to that point in time, it was the largest sent out on the B&A.¹⁰¹

About 1914, the Randalls sold to Lewis P. and Alice Dolbier Chadwick of Holden. They had previously worked with their fathers at the Upper Dam House, dam, and farm of the Union Water and Power Company on Upper Richardson Lake in western Maine, and had moved back to Holden about 1910. After buying the sporting camp, they moved to Brownville where Lewis' parents joined them. The degree to which the whole family was involved in running the sporting camp, now known as "Chadwick's Camps," is unknown.¹⁰² After seven years, Lewis sold the sporting camp in 1921 to his brother, Fred W. Chadwick, who was 22 years younger. He too grew up on the family farm in Holden and resided there, until he made the purchase and moved to the sporting camp. A year later in July, Fred married Abby Savage, whose parents, Milo residents, worked for Lewis. The couple, with help from their son Fred and daughter Connie, ran the sporting camp for the next 25 years.

In the early 1930s, they hired a young recent Milo high school graduate, Cliff J. Kealiher, to drive the team that brought guests to the sporting camp and he remained involved for the next 43 years. Cliff liked the work and the location, and obtained a

¹⁰¹ *The Maine Sportsman*, Vol. 11 no. 122 (October 1903): 17.

¹⁰² Eight years later John and Lewis left the Upper Dam Hotel under the care of George and returned to Holden. George managed the hotel until 1919 when he left and moved to nearby Aziscohos Dam on the Magalloway River, but he returned a year later and stayed until 1945. After selling the sporting camp the couple moved to Errol, NH, near Upper Dam, where they farmed and Lewis was caretaker at the Aziscohos Dam.

guide's license. After serving in WWII, he returned and married the Chadwick's daughter Connie. They left Maine for five years and then returned to buy and run the sporting camp for 23 seasons (1950-1973) with the help of their two daughters Rosie and Carol. Connie wanted the family together, so when their daughters reached school age, they obtained a home in Greenville, where they lived together as much of the time as possible while school was in session.

In 1973, Cliff and Connie sold the sporting camp to their daughter, Carol and her husband Andrew Stirling, and continued to reside in Greenville. Cliff then ran the area campgrounds at South Inlet, Two Mile Brook, and Scott Storehouse for the next 13 years. Andrew and Carol continued the family traditions in running the sporting camp and raising children, three sons, Jack, Nathan, and Eric, while doing so. Carol homeschooled their three boys; whereas, her grandparents sent their children to school in Milo and they lived with relatives.

In 2003, Andrew and Carol passed the sporting camp to their youngest son Eric and his wife Mildred. As past family members have done, their two children Avis and Oscar are growing up at the sporting camp.

During the 100 plus years of Chadwick lineage ownership, a few things have changed and some have remained the same. One category of change revolves around guest stays and calendar. In the early years, guests were primarily fishermen and hunters; however, starting about the turn of the century whole families began to come for an extended stay, but gradually the length of those visits shortened to a week or two. To help

bolster revenue, the sport camp housed CCC crews working in the area in the 1930s. Beginning in 1933 the guest list expanded to include AT hikers, and those crews performing maintenance on the trail. Myron Avery, founder of the trail in Maine, and his group from the Potomac, Virginia were frequent guests. Beginning about 1970, the sporting camp opened in winter for the first time in order to serve snowmobilers. About 2004, the complex welcomed cross-country skiers.

Many traditions of the sporting camp have been retained. Amazingly, the sporting camp, with five of its sleeping cabins built in the 1800s, its dining room built in 1914 by nearby neighbor Joe Boudreau, and its newest structure built in 1935, has never lost a building to fire. Each family maintained the historic ambience of a traditional Maine sporting camp of the late 1800s. They maintained a garden through 1988. The sporting camp has always had rafts or boats on Big Lyford, and Second and Third Branch Ponds for its guests. Beginning in 1906 guests climbed White Cap Mountain on the fire warden's trail and obtained a wonderful view from its 12-foot wooden tower; guests still climb it, but on the Appalachian Trail. Most noteworthy is that each of the families worked hard to preserve the visual appearance of a late 1800s sporting camp and model the daily traditions of that life, and, within that context, found new ways to sustain their livelihood in these wilds.

Another ingenious woodsman and guide using the Chamberlain Lake Tote Road in the late 1880s was Evan (Eph) H. Gerrish, born and raised in Brownville and living in Bangor. He was one of the first men to recognize the advent of an increasing number of

sports in the Maine woods and built a sporting camp at Lake Onawa. At the time, 1873, some thought it was the first sporting camp in eastern Maine.¹⁰³ Apparently, Eph also realized that the influx of sports would increase the demand for canoes. In those early years he, like all others, used birch bark canoes in his guiding and woods work. They took great care and frequent maintenance, and above all were not easily mass-produced. By 1882, he switched from making fly rods to the first canvas covered canoes, which he manufactured for the next 29 years in Bangor using a technique he perfected.

For transportation to his B-Pond sporting camp Gerrish took advantage of the teamster traffic on the Chamberlain Lake Tote Road. He met his sport or two at KIW and then obtained a ride on a tote sled to Ten Mile shanty, the first stop north of KIW, and spent the night.¹⁰⁴ The next day he and the sport departed from the main road and walked a couple miles to B-Pond (Baker Pond) landing. Here, near a beach at the southwest corner of the pond, Gerrish built his first structure in the late 1880s. However, a new dam in 1890 presented a flooding problem and he moved easterly to the knoll above the beach. He kept his operation small, one cabin, and ran it by himself with some assistance of his local guide friends.

¹⁰³ Thompson, J.A., "Onawa in 'Seventy-Two,'" *The Maine Sportsman*, Vol.12 no. 136 (December 1904): 53-56.

¹⁰⁴ A great deal of the information for B-Pond came from John Leathers who worked in the area, and from "Some Notes on a Two-Week Trip to Katahdin Iron Works and B-Pond 18 September 1920 to 4 October 1920," an unpublished personal account written by Theodore L. Smith.

In 1893, Gerrish sold the single cabin to the popular KIW guides Jack Caughlin and Dave Hutchinson, who kept the sporting camp going for the next 30 years. The demand for their services was great, but they took on only the number of sports they could tend to themselves and at times turned away business. Hutchinson and Caughlin first met and became friends in 1888, when they participated in the log drive through nearby Gulf Hagas, and then logged together for the next 30 years. Jack was apparently from the area, but Dave, born in 1850 in Glasgow, Scotland, grew up in New Brunswick, Canada and moved to New Hampshire in 1886 to log. In 1891, Jack helped him build a home up on the arm of nearby Shanty Mountain, an area that had great spruce gum picking. Dave picked the next couple years with area guide, logger and jack-of-all-trades, Martin Conley. At other times, he tended anyone of a number of dams in the area including that at B-Pond. Where Jack actually lived in the 1890s is unknown, but he had a cabin in the early 1890s on Yoke Pond, north of B-Pond. About 1918, Jack disappeared leaving no word of his whereabouts, but Dave continued with the sporting camp, which now was a compound of three cabins, two they built in 1895 and the Gerrish cabin, which they rebuilt in 1901.

Hutchinson, at 73 years of age, probably ceased operations about 1923 and the camps never reopened as a commercial sporting camp. The William H. McCrillis family heirs of Concord, Massachusetts began to buy more land to add to what their great uncle William H. McCrillis amassed in the 1870s.¹⁰⁵ Perhaps in the mid-1920s, but certainly by

¹⁰⁵ Duplessis, Shirley. *Hidden in the Woods: The Story of Kokad-jo*. Greenville, Me: Moosehead Communications, 1977.

1938, the children of Harriet Griswold's (McCrillis' sister) youngest son William H. and his wife Anne Merrill¹⁰⁶ had amassed the acres that included the structures. They used the sporting camp, but did not run it as a commercial enterprise.¹⁰⁷ In 1964, the Griswold children sold the cabins and the 50 acres on which they rested to Farnham W. Smith, who was born and raised and then lived in Concord, Massachusetts.¹⁰⁸ The enclave has remained with the Smith family heirs through a series of trusts.

Access to the site was not always from KIW, as it was in the early years. Logging roads changed and were not always passable. By the late 1950s, they came in from the Jo-Mary Road to the northeast using part of the old log hauler road from Upper Jo-Mary Lake to B-Pond. Around 1960, the family traveled in from the Kokadjo area to the north side of B-Pond. At the landing, they had a special scow to bring people and dunnage across the pond to the compound.

Another friend of Caughlin and Hutchinson, Charlie Berry, had a sporting camp on Yoke Pond by the mid-1890s and he used the KIW access route into the 1940s. Berry built one of the cabins and some believe Caughlin built the other one prior to Berry's

¹⁰⁶ The children's names were Margaret, Merrill, Roger and Anna.

¹⁰⁷ The children had grown up in Concord, Massachusetts, kept their ties to Maine, and then lived in the greater Boston area.

¹⁰⁸ Smith first worked in his grandfather's Blanchard Company, and then formed the Concord Lumber Company before he opened an investment business. His first caretaker was the Greenville superintendent of schools, but he soon found the enclave required too much of his time. Mac Buchanan, superintendent of schools in Milo, took over the caretaking job that he served in for years, perhaps until about 1977. (information source: John Leathers)

presence. Charlie met his sports at KIW and before he bought a horse, they either walked or rode with a teamster to Ten-mile shanty, then walked to the beach near Hutchinson's and Caughlin's sporting camp at B-Pond, paddled across, and hiked a trail over the Boardman Mountain saddle and down to Yoke Pond in the Cooper Brook watershed of the West Branch of the Penobscot River watershed. He used some cabins on North B Ridge between B-Pond and the East Branch of the Pleasant River as a rest stop. By 1920, the buildings on the ridge were not in good condition and some believe Berry dismantled one and reassembled it at Yoke Pond. He left the others to disintegrate as access to his sporting camp was improving with an alternate new route coming from Greenville c.1921.¹⁰⁹

Beginning around 1910 Hutchinson, Caughlin, and Berry welcomed Joe Boudreau, who became a friendly and beloved hermit of the area until he died.¹¹⁰ He built a cabin on Logan Brook, not far from the Chamberlain Lake Tote Road and three quarters of a mile from the east end of Third West Branch Pond. Boudreau was a woodsman, who logged, guided, fished, hunted, trapped, built log cabins for others, and probably picked spruce gum. He first came to the area about 1895 as a logger on the upper East Branch of the Pleasant River, an area served by the Chamberlain Lake Tote Road long after the portions of the road north of this area fell into disuse. Boudreau did not run a typical-of-the-times sporting camp. People knew he guided and if one or two sports sought his

¹⁰⁹ Geller, William. *Within Katahdin's Realm: Log Drives and Sporting Camps*, an unpublished manuscript, 2015.

¹¹⁰ The predominant information sources for Joe Boudreau include: Eric Stirling, whose great grandparents knew Boudreau, and Shirley Duplessis' book on Kokad-jo (see note 105).

services, he accepted, and they stayed with him at his year round cabin home. Boudreau probably met his sports in KIW until the early 1920s and used either the longer Pleasant Valley Tote Road or the Chamberlain Lake Tote Road, or, beginning about 1917, when access from Greenville became reasonable, he may have met sports at First Roach Pond.

At the request of the landowners, Boudreau moved his home c.1923 to a cabin he built on the south shore of the cove at the east end of Third West Branch Pond. When the McCrillis Land Trust purchased the area lands in 1923, they asked trappers with cabins to abandoned them, but Boudreau's tenure in the area influenced the family and they provided the lease for the new location. He lived year round at the pond, had a garden and root cellar, and continued to guide, hunt and trap as he always had. He also guided and continued to do other work for the Chadwicks on First West Branch Pond. About 1933, he built two additional cabins on his lease to handle the over flow of CCC workers housed at First West Branch Pond Camps and those working on the Appalachian Trail. Workers slept at his cabins and ate at Chadwicks. Boudreau's original cabin is gone, but the other two remain.

By spring 1937, when Boudreau had become so lame that he could no longer go outside, his good friend Jesse Burns moved in and took care of him.¹¹¹ They first got to know each other on a c.1895 logging operation, and then hunted, trapped, and logged together until they died. Burns, who was born in 1868 in Shirley, Massachusetts and grew

¹¹¹ Information about Jessie Burns came from a number of sources: Eric Stirling, Piscataquis County Probate Court records, Piscataquis County Register of Deeds, Moosehead Historical Society, and Ancestry.com.

up in a family employed by the cotton mills, apparently moved to Maine to take up logging and other woods work. By 1911, he lived in KIW and was guiding sports from the hotel to area sporting camps.¹¹² He also guided for the Chadwicks and their clients, like the Howell family. In 1920, he was logging for the Howland Pulp and Paper Company and lived at camp #1 on White Brook in Bowdoin College Grant East, just north of KIW.

No one ever knew where Jesse really lived in the woods, when he was not at an active logging camp. Burns was probably asked by the McCrillis heirs to abandon his trapper's cabins. However, by the late 1920s, Jessie had a cabin at the site of an abandoned logging camp that was just beyond the Baker Brook crossing, a little past the three-mile marker below Big Lyford Pond, on the Pleasant Valley Tote Road. Whether he built a new structure or fixed up an abandoned building is unknown. The cabin remained in usable condition through at least 1937, but someone burned the structure by 1940.¹¹³

In March 1935, Burns inherited the Howell family cabin that Charles Randall built on a lot that abutted the north side of his lot at First West Branch Pond. In 1904, Charles M. Howell, one of Charles Randall's sports had a successful hunt. The following year he was back again for eight days with a friend and they shot a moose, two black bears, four

¹¹² "Big Houston Camps guest register 1896-1939." University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections

¹¹³ Bliss, George S. *The Bliss Journals of Little Lyford Ponds* (1928, 1930, 1934, 1935, 1939, 1943, 1946). www.blissjournals.com

deer, a fox and 12 partridges. Randall and his son Roy did the guiding.¹¹⁴ Randall apparently liked Howell, and when requested by Howell to build him a cabin c.1904, he agreed. Howell designed the structure, not a typical small rough and rustic log cabin, but one with indoor plumbing, a huge brick fireplace and Tiffany Lamps. The cabin, Howell Camp, had matching mission style black stained oak furniture from Morris and Murch in Boston and many pieces are still in use in the cabin. Howell, whose family owned a button manufacturing company in Newton, Massachusetts, was an avid moose hunter, and entertained his clients at his lavish cabin. He died in the late 1920s and on March 29, 1935 his wife Annie and her children, Frederick A. Howell of Weston, Massachusetts and Ruth Howell Hallett, also of Weston, deeded the cabin to Jesse Burns for a dollar.¹¹⁵

A year and a half later, November 11, 1936, Burns sold the cabin to Chadwick, and two more transactions followed in the next 29 years. The sale included the main building, a smaller log structure, and a boathouse, and was contingent upon Burns being able to use the smaller log building for the next six months rent-free. At some point, Guy Gannett, the Maine publishing magnate, began staying at First West Branch Pond camps and got interested in Howell Camp. He used it enough that the name of the structure changed to Gannett Camp. Gannett Publishing Company paid for the remodeling and reconditioning of the cabin, and bought it from Chadwick September 20, 1945. Fifteen

¹¹⁴ *Boston Daily Globe*, November 5, 1904, p.11 and October 27, 1905, p.4.

¹¹⁵ After his father's death, Frederick took over the button business, which he sold before 1940 and for which he then continued to work.

years later Cliff Kealiher, Chadwick's son-in-law and the sporting camp's proprietor, bought back the cabin and made it cabin #10, part of First West Branch Pond Camps.

When Burns negotiated the sale, he may have anticipated moving in to take care of Boudreau; sadly though, he was only able to care for him until November 1937, when Burns passed away.¹¹⁶ Boudreau quickly gave his sporting camp to his close friend Fred Chadwick and lived his final three years at the CCC camp on First Roach Pond at South Inlet, the site of South Inlet Campground.

The Boudreau's cabins served a number of purposes after he died. The Chadwicks used his cabins through at least 1942 as a branch camp that AT hikers could use with prior arrangement. By 1946, the family stopped using the site and sold the structures to Hollingsworth and Whitney Company for use in support of their logging operation. Sometime in the 1960s Cliff Kealiher bought back the cabin Boudreau built for AT hikers and Dwight Demeritt bought the cabin Boudreau used. Fred's great grandson Eric Stirling bought the Demeritt lease in 2011 and is refurbishing the cabin for his family's personal use.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ Upon his death the court found that Jesse F. Burns was an alias for George Franklin Griffin of Shirley, Massachusetts. Joe Boudreau knew of no relatives so an appointed administrator of the estate began an investigation that led to a brother in Massachusetts and two sisters in Maine. Jesse had remained in contact with his siblings who knew him as George. ("Utterly Curious Story Comes from Greenville," *Bangor Daily News*, May 14 or 15, 1939)

¹¹⁷ In 1957, Wendell Brown, an area game warden, built the other cabin at the Boudreau site. Ray Bickmore, who provided this information, and his wife bought the cabin in 1985 and continue to hold the lease. Ray's wife taught him how to fly fish. Bill Macomber also provided information.

Charles Howell also had an outlying cabin, Camp Hiawatha, built on the north side of the cove at the east end of Third West Branch Pond sometime in the early 1900s and subsequent owners preserved it.¹¹⁸ This cabin was not fancy, like the one on First West Branch Pond; it was a typical Maine fishing cabin. Some of the materials for the cabin came via the Roach River waterway. One board has the date October 17, 1906 written in pencil along with some undecipherable words. After Howell died in 1929, his family soon abandoned the cabin. The Dover-Foxcroft Roy Dow family picked up the lease on the abandon cabin in 1931 from Prentiss and Carlisle Company. For some unknown reason the Howell-Burns 1935 sales agreement for the Howell cabin at First West Branch Pond identified some specific belongings that included blankets and instructed Burns to deliver them to Joe Boudreau for Camp Hiawatha at Third West Branch Pond.

Dow, a lumberman and logger, owned a number of cabins that he used for different purposes and his family continues to retain this one, his fishing cabin. Dow passed the cabin on to his son, Russell, also a woodsman, and he passed it on to his son Jim, a registered Maine guide. Over the decades of ownership, the family has done its best to preserve the cabin's early 1900s authenticity. Whoever built the cabin, perhaps Charles Randall and men he hired, created a well-constructed cabin on posts. The advantage of such construction was the circulation of air, which kept logs drier than if the cabin sat on the ground. The sill logs finally deteriorated to the degree that Jim Dow cut

¹¹⁸ The Jim Dow family provided Information on this cabin.

and trimmed nearby trees, skidded them in, jacked up the cabin, removed the rotted logs, and put the new ones in place. They preserved the original outhouse by moving it to a different location and turning it into a work shed.

The only other neighbor of Boudreau, Burns, and Dow was Pete Peters who had two sites in the headwater area of the East Branch of the Pleasant River between c.1935 and 1975.¹¹⁹ By the time Pete had a cabin on Murphy Pond and another on the East Branch in the mid 1930s, loggers had nearly abandoned the Chamberlain Lake Tote Road and his access was from Greenville. He moved to the Murphy Pond cabin after leaving a clerk job at the CCC Kokadjo Camp, which opened in 1933 and closed in 1938. For some of the early years, Pete lived winters in Kokadjo, but later he resided year round at his cabin. At some point, he abandoned the Murphy Pond cabin and lived in the East Branch cabin that was at the sharp bend above a former Great Northern Paper Company depot camp at the mouth of the brook from Hutchinson Pond. When asked about the bars on the windows and old saw blades that edged the entryways, he said the bars were to keep the law enforcers out. Others thought it had to do with his fear of bears and the woods in general.

Pete was a quiet eccentric type person who had few resources. Occasionally he hosted a sport or two at Murphy Pond and at times did a little guiding for Charlie Berry at Yoke Pond Camps. He was a frequent visitor at the Yoke Pond Camps looking for a food handout, which he received. He always carried a gun, but only hunted from a roadway.

¹¹⁹ Much of the information about Peters came from John Skillin, John Leathers, and the Duplessis book on Kokad-jo (see note 93).

One year he shot a deer that was perhaps not more than 50 feet from the road, and then sat down on the road. John Leathers came by shortly thereafter and Pete asked him and his friend to retrieve the deer. At the close of hunting season folks in the Yoke Pond area gathered to celebrate the year and everyone always joined together to give him a good collection of foodstuffs. Those who knew Pete thought he might have modeled himself on the hermit character Jake Peters in Earl Biggers book, *Seven Keys to Baldpate*. Peter, whose real name was J. Wilfred Peters, lived on the river at least through 1975. In 2016, the North Maine Woods campsite above Hutchinson Brook is the site of Pete's now disintegrated cabin.